A/58/1

United Nations

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization

General Assembly
Official Records
Fifty-eighth Session
Supplement No. 1 (A/58/1)

General Assembly
Official Records
Fifty-eighth Session
Supplement No. 1 (A/58/1)

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization

United Nations • New York, 2003

Note

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

ISSN 0082-8173

[28 August 2003]

Contents

Chapter		Paragraphs	Page
	Introduction	1–10	1
I.	Achieving peace and security	11–69	3
	Iraq	14–18	3
	Conflict prevention and peacemaking	19–38	4
	Peacekeeping and peace-building	39–53	8
	The United Nations and regional organizations	54–57	11
	Electoral assistance	58–60	12
	Terrorism	61–63	13
	Disarmament	64–67	13
	Sanctions	68–69	14
II.	Meeting humanitarian commitments	70–104	15
	The challenge of protecting and assisting refugees and displaced populations	72–78	15
	Delivering humanitarian assistance and the challenge of underfunded emergencies	79–96	17
	Natural disaster management: responding to emergencies and building capacity	97–98	20
	Coordination of assistance and the protection of civilians in armed conflict	99–104	21
III.	Cooperating for development	105–166	23
	Eradicating extreme poverty	107–132	23
	Sustainable development	133–137	28
	Africa	138–144	28
	Addressing the needs of the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States	145–148	30
	Battling HIV/AIDS	149–157	30
	Social development	158–166	31
IV.	The international legal order and human rights	167–199	33
	Human rights development	167–177	33
	The International Criminal Court	178–180	35
	International Tribunals	181–190	35

	Enhancing the rule of law	191–194	37
	Legal affairs	195–199	39
V.	Enhancing management	200–218	41
	Administration and management	200–206	41
	Accountability and oversight	207–213	42
	Strengthening the Organization	214–218	43
VI.	Partnerships	219–248	45
	Communications	219–230	45
	United Nations Fund for International Partnerships	231–234	46
	Project services	235–239	47
	Civil society and business partnerships	240–245	48
	Conclusion	246–248	50

Introduction

1. This is my seventh annual report on the work of the United Nations. Once again I take stock of what the Organization has done during the past year and how it has responded to the heavy demands upon it. The chapters of this report bear evidence of the ever-increasing number and scope of the tasks that the Organization performs in diverse areas such as peace and security, economic and social development, humanitarian assistance, international law, human rights and the environment. The Organization has made good progress in many areas, but in other important fields it will take more time to achieve its goals.

2. Undoubtedly, in the area of peace and security, it has been a trying year for the United Nations. The war in Iraq severely tested the principle of collective security and the resilience of the Organization. Rarely in its fifty-eight-year history have such dire forecasts been made about the United Nations. The United Nations will emerge strengthened if we make a measured appreciation of what happened, think about the sort of Organization we want in the future, and start making the necessary changes.

3. On 19 August 2003 the United Nations headquarters in Iraq was subjected to a cold-blooded and savage attack. This was the most deliberate and vicious attack against the United Nations in its history. My Special Representative, Sergio Vieira de Mello, and other devoted servants of the United Nations were brutally murdered, and many others were wounded. I would like to pay tribute to all of them for their courage and commitment to the ideals of the United Nations. I wish to express my profound and heartfelt sympathy to their loved ones. Those extremists who killed our colleagues have committed a crime, not only against the United Nations, but against Iraq itself.

4. During the past year the United Nations has been involved in peace operations in many parts of the world, including Afghanistan, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste. In Liberia, the multinational force authorized by the Security Council is helping to restore security and stability, and in due course will be replaced by a United Nations peacekeeping force. Peace agreements by themselves, however, mark only the first step in bringing lasting peace and prosperity to war-torn societies. The traumatic rupture of economic, political and social relations between groups and individuals characterizes such societies. Creating or rebuilding civil society is a crucial long-term commitment and is essential to establishing and consolidating democracy. Democratic institutions and principles should be embedded within a self-sustaining civil society. Countries emerging from civil strife must find their own paths to humane governance and national reconciliation, but international assistance will often be necessary.

5. The international community continues to take action to combat international terrorism, especially in view of new attacks in Indonesia, Morocco, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia and elsewhere. Human rights must not be sacrificed in the struggle against international terrorism, however. Moreover, while poverty and grievance over injustices are only indirectly related to terrorism, and cannot excuse it, these indirect links must nonetheless be taken into account in strategies aimed at reducing the incidence of terrorist acts. Promoting measures to reduce poverty, address injustices, strengthen good governance and build tolerance are essential to that end, as well as for their own sake. To keep a genuinely global coalition against terrorism together the world will need to see progress on the other fronts of the struggle for a humane and just world order.

6. Disarmament, including the eradication of weapons of mass destruction, remains a major priority for the international community. Recent developments have underlined the potential threat of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of terrorists. The existing global disarmament norms relevant to weapons of mass destruction need to be strengthened and protected against erosion. Disarmament requires multilateral cooperation and can be accomplished only in an atmosphere of trust.

7. While the immediate and urgent challenges of peace and security require sedulous attention, it is also important that they should not divert attention from our work in economic and social development. At present, there is a wide gap between the rhetoric of inclusion and the reality of exclusion. Our efforts for peace will be in vain unless we can begin to bridge this gap by achieving real progress for the poorest countries in the world. Furthermore, our efforts to contain and resolve conflicts should not drain resources from other fights that we are waging around the world to protect

refugees and displaced persons, to combat HIV/AIDS and other diseases, and to promote sustainable development.

8. The outbreak of the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) was a sobering reminder of the world's vulnerability to disease and the risks of it spreading rapidly across borders. At the same time, the effective coordinated response demonstrated the value of multilateral cooperation, in this case through the professional and speedy intervention of the World Health Organization.

9. In order to address the broad range of contemporary international problems it is important to forge partnerships and alliances. Governments alone do not have the capacity to find solutions to these problems. We must continue to find greater opportunities for the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society, in general, to contribute to the realization of the Organization's goals.

10. The United Nations is not an end in itself. Rather, it is an instrument for achieving common ends. The strength and effectiveness of the Organization depends on the active support of its Member States and their policies. Moreover, achievement of the Organization's purposes requires a shared consensus about its fundamental goals. That does not mean that Member States need to agree on all issues. However, it does mean that they should be ready to use the Organization to achieve mutual objectives and to accommodate different national interests. In calculating their national interests, they should give due weight to the value and importance of a just and stable world order.

Chapter I
Achieving peace and security

11. During the past year, United Nations activities in the area of peace and security continued to focus on the prevention and resolution of conflict and the provision of assistance to societies emerging from conflict. While the United Nations attempted to address a variety of new challenges in this field, issues such as terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction remained of great concern. The war in Iraq highlighted how rapidly the security environment in which we now live can evolve, as well as the diversity of perceptions on how global peace and security should be maintained.

12. Increasingly, civil conflicts pose a serious threat to international peace and security. They create situations in which perpetrators of violence act with impunity. In these zones of impunity, the scourges of our time — drug trafficking, arms trafficking, human trafficking, the training of terrorists — flourish. Illicit transboundary networks of finance and trade link these zones, fomenting instability that affects entire regions, or even the international system itself. Decades of development efforts and centuries of social cohesion can thus be undone in a short period of time. The impact on women and girls is particularly severe, as is made clear in my report on women and peace and security submitted to the Security Council in October 2002. The complex nature of present threats to peace and security has led the United Nations system increasingly to focus on thematic issues. Indicative of this is the continuing practice of the Security Council to convene open meetings on questions such as children and armed conflict, women and peace and security, civilians in armed conflict and small arms. This practice has now been expanded to include thematic issues in a regional context, such as small arms and mercenary activities as threats to peace and security in West Africa (18 March 2003) and Africa's food crisis as a threat to peace and security (7 April 2003).

13. The means available to the United Nations for the discharge of its responsibilities in the area of international peace and security vary from preventive diplomacy to peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building. In practice, the issues falling within these four areas of action are integrally related. In Cyprus and Western Sahara, for example, peacemaking and peacekeeping have been taking place side by side for years. Any peace-building effort — Afghanistan is a good example — has a strong component of preventive diplomacy, as applied in the context of a post-conflict situation. The present report contains a special section on Iraq, in acknowledgement of the central place that this question occupied on the agenda of the Organization and in the attention of world public opinion over the year under review.

Iraq

14. On 16 September 2002, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq informed me that his Government had decided to allow the return of United Nations weapons inspectors without conditions. This followed a series of discussions I had held with the Iraqi side in March, May and July 2002, as well as my appeal in the General Assembly in September 2002, urging Iraq to comply with its obligations under Security Council resolutions. I welcomed the resumption of inspections by the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) in Iraq in November 2002 that followed the unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 1441 (2002). It was with regret that I noted in the report of 27 January 2003 of the Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC that while Iraq was cooperating on process it did not appear to have come to a genuine acceptance of its obligations.

15. By early March 2003 there were divisions in the Security Council as to how to proceed. I continued to urge united international action, as well as constant and persistent pressure on the leadership of Iraq, through daily exchanges with Council members, the League of Arab States, UNMOVIC and others both in New York and in capitals. By mid-March it was clear, however, that some Member States had taken the position that it was impossible to resolve the crisis without the use of force. On 17 March I informed the Council that I would suspend United Nations activities in Iraq and withdraw all remaining United Nations system personnel the following day.

16. Following the end of major hostilities, which had resulted in the occupation of Iraq by a coalition headed by the United States of America and the United

Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and after protracted deliberations, the Security Council adopted, on 22 May 2003, resolution 1483 (2003). In paragraph 8 of the resolution the Council requested me to appoint a Special Representative whose responsibilities would include coordinating United Nations activities in Iraq and, in coordination with the Coalition Provisional Authority, assisting the people of Iraq in such areas as humanitarian assistance, reconstruction and development, human rights, legal and judicial reform and the restoration of an internationally recognized, representative Government of Iraq. I proceeded to appoint a Special Representative for an initial period of four months.

17. My Special Representative travelled extensively throughout Iraq and met representatives of a wide and diverse spectrum of Iraqi society. He and his team also established regular contacts with the Administrator and other officials of the Coalition Provisional Authority. I and my Special Representative initiated a dialogue with leaders of countries neighbouring Iraq and the broader international community. In my first report to the Security Council (S/2003/715) I stressed the fundamental principles underlying the activities of the United Nations under resolution 1483 (2003) — including the need to restore sovereignty to the people of Iraq as soon as possible and the need to respect the Iraqi people's right to determine their political future — and our desire to keep foremost in mind the interests of the Iraqi people in our assistance activities. The report provided an initial assessment of the scope of the challenges involved in implementing the mandate conferred by resolution 1483 (2003) and indicated those areas in which I consider that the United Nations can play a useful role, on the basis of its expertise and comparative advantage. To this end, I proposed the establishment of a United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). On 14 August, the Security Council, by resolution 1500 (2003), decided to establish UNAMI for an initial period of 12 months. The Council also welcomed the establishment, on 13 July 2003, of the broadly representative Governing Council of Iraq, as an important step towards the formation of an internationally recognized, representative and sovereign Government of Iraq.

18. The wanton attack on the United Nations headquarters building in Baghdad on 19 August 2003 dealt a severe blow to the Organization's efforts at assisting Iraq's return to normalcy. My Special Representative, Sergio Vieira de Mello, and several international and local staff members lost their lives in this cowardly act, while many more were injured. Their sacrifice will not be in vain. The United Nations will continue helping the Iraqi people to rebuild their country and regain their sovereignty, under leaders of their own choosing. Meanwhile, I shall continue to emphasize that it is vital that the people of Iraq see a clear timetable with a specific sequence of events leading to the full restoration of sovereignty as soon as possible. This means that the establishment of the Governing Council must be followed by a constitutional process run by Iraqis for Iraqis. To this end, the United Nations will maintain an active role in facilitating and supporting the political process. My new Special Representative will continue to work with the Governing Council and the Coalition Provisional Authority and will pursue further the dialogue with leaders of the countries of the region and beyond.

Conflict prevention and peacemaking

19. A comprehensive exercise is under way to implement my report of 2001 on the prevention of armed conflict. A vital task in this respect is to foster the building of conflict prevention capacities at local and national levels and the elaboration of regional preventive strategies that would integrate political and developmental elements. The United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination chose preventing armed conflict as the main theme of its second regular session of 2002, offering an opportunity to promote greater coherence and coordination in system-wide efforts in the field of structural conflict prevention, at the national, regional and international levels. The resolution recently adopted by the General Assembly on the prevention of armed conflict gives the United Nations a strong mandate not only to continue but to expand and intensify its conflict prevention activities.

20. After almost three years of violence and confrontation, new hope for the resumption of the stalled Middle East peace process has finally emerged. Following the appointment of a Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority, a road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was formally presented to the parties on 30 April 2003. This performance-based blueprint, elaborated by the Quartet (the United Nations, the European Union, the

Russian Federation and the United States of America) at a series of meetings, includes clear phases, timelines and benchmarks. It aims at achieving progress through parallel and reciprocal steps by the two parties in the political, security, economic, humanitarian and institution-building fields, under an effective international monitoring mechanism. This process should lead to the establishment of an independent, democratic and viable Palestinian State existing side by side in peace and security with Israel and its other neighbours, as affirmed in Security Council resolution 1397 (2002). I was particularly encouraged by the outcome of the summit meeting between the parties and the President of the United States of America at Aqaba, Jordan, on 4 June 2003, where the two sides made a firm commitment to implementing the road map.

21. Despite the recent signs of progress, the vicious circle of violence, retaliation and revenge continued during most of the period under review, resulting in further substantial loss of life and destruction. A total collapse of the Palestinian economy was prevented only by the infusion of significant foreign assistance, including through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and other United Nations agencies and programmes. A deteriorating security environment and problems of access hampered the efforts of the United Nations and others to address the growing humanitarian crisis in the occupied Palestinian territory, as further detailed in the following chapter.

22. Through my direct contacts and the Quartet mechanism, most recently at the meeting of the Quartet on 22 June 2003 on the shores of the Dead Sea, in Jordan, I remained personally engaged in efforts at achieving peace in the Middle East. The Security Council was kept informed of those efforts and relevant developments in monthly briefings by the Secretariat. The final goal of the road map, and of the entire peace process, remains a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict, including the Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli tracks, on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 1397 (2002), the Madrid Peace Conference of 1991 and the principle of land for peace, agreements previously reached by the parties, and the peace initiative endorsed by the League of Arab States at its Beirut summit in March 2002.

23. I regret to report that the Cyprus problem, despite the intensive exercise of my good offices, remains unresolved. The lifting of travel restrictions between the north and south of the island in recent months, while welcome, is no substitute for a comprehensive settlement of the core issues. A unique opportunity to achieve a settlement was squandered — a settlement which would have allowed a reunited Cyprus to sign the Treaty of Accession to the European Union on 16 April 2003. With time running out before the Treaty's signature, and with hopes renewed by the election in November 2002 of a Government of Turkey that seemed genuinely disposed to resolving the question, I submitted in November 2002 a draft comprehensive settlement to the two Cypriot leaders. Despite their agreeing to negotiate on the basis of that plan, the negotiations failed to result in an agreement and in April 2003 I closed the office of my Special Adviser. A settlement before the entry into force of the Treaty of Accession to the European Union — on 1 May 2004 — would still allow a reunited Cyprus to accede to the European Union. I do not believe, however, that any purpose would be served by my taking a new initiative unless the parties demonstrate their commitment to a settlement on the basis of the plan. Should such a commitment be forthcoming, I shall resume active efforts to resolve this longstanding dispute. In the meantime, the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus continues to monitor the buffer zone across the island.

24. Early in 2003, the Government of Angola and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) completed the implementation of the political aspects of the 1994 Lusaka Protocol. This led to the dissolution of the United Nations Mission in Angola. The Security Council lifted sanctions against UNITA in December 2002. Responsibility for the remaining activities envisaged by the Security Council was transferred to a strengthened office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator, through which the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other United Nations agencies are supporting communities in the sustainable reintegration of former combatants and internally displaced persons. They are also working to strengthen national capacity on mine action and implement mine-clearing operations; monitor the respect of human rights through a special unit attached to the Resident Coordinator's Office; and strengthen international coordination to assist the Government in organizing a donor conference.

25. In Burundi, the second phase of the transition began in May 2003 with the inauguration of the new President and Vice-President. Facilitation efforts involving the United Nations led to the signing of ceasefire agreements between the Transitional Government and three of the four armed groups, and the establishment of a Joint Ceasefire Commission. In April 2003, the African Union authorized the deployment of the African Mission in Burundi to assist in the implementation of the ceasefire. United Nations agencies are continuing to help the African Union to demobilize and reintegrate combatants in support of the full implementation of the Arusha Agreement. Nonetheless, the continuation of the fighting, most recently in July 2003, points to the urgent need to address all of the outstanding issues in the peace process. I welcome the regional initiatives aimed at implementing a ceasefire.

26. My Representative for Somalia continued to encourage the parties to reach an inclusive and credible agreement at the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference that opened in October 2002 in Kenya, under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). By mid-2003, Somali delegates had endorsed the reports of five of the six Reconciliation Committees covering important issues relating to peace-building in Somalia. Still under discussion, before they could move to power-sharing, was a report on the question of a provisional charter for a future transitional Government. I hope that the Somali leaders will build on the Eldoret Declaration of 27 October 2002 and reach a final and inclusive agreement backed by a serious commitment to its implementation.

27. Progress achieved at the IGAD-led peace talks on the Sudan has improved the prospects for lasting peace there. The momentum created by the signing of the Machakos Protocol, in July 2002, if sustained, could lead to a comprehensive agreement soon. My Special Adviser and staff from the Secretariat will continue to support the mediation efforts. In addition, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in the Sudan has prepared an extensive programme to promote economic recovery and thus buttress the peace talks.

28. Faced with a continuing stalemate in Western Sahara, the Security Council requested my Personal Envoy to put forward a political solution that would provide for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, taking into account concerns expressed by the parties and consulting, as appropriate, others with relevant experience. A plan was accordingly presented to Morocco, the Frente POLISARIO, Algeria and Mauritania in January 2003. In March, Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO expressed their reservations to the plan. Early in July, however, the Frente POLISARIO informed my Personal Envoy of its acceptance of the peace plan. On 9 July, another text of the peace plan, amended to add a third ballot choice in the eventual referendum, providing for self-government or autonomy, was transmitted to the parties. On 31 July, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1495 (2003), by which it expressed its support for the peace plan for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara and called upon the parties to work with the United Nations and with each other towards its acceptance and implementation. Meanwhile, the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara continued to monitor the ceasefire between the parties, in effect since September 1991.

29. Since my first meeting in Paris, in September 2002, with the President of Cameroon and the President of Nigeria, my good offices were made available to the two countries as they negotiated a resolution of their border dispute. At the request of the two Heads of State, after our second meeting in November 2002 at Geneva, I established the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission, chaired by my Special Representative for West Africa, to facilitate a peaceful implementation of the ruling of the International Court of Justice of October 2002 on the land and maritime boundary between Cameroon and Nigeria and help to build confidence between the two countries. The Mixed Commission holds periodic meetings, alternately in Yaoundé and Abuja. Progress has been made with the creation of two subcommissions, one on the demarcation of the land boundary and another on affected populations. The latter subcommission will assess the situation of the populations affected by the Court's ruling and consider modalities relating to the protection of their rights.

30. In Latin America, the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala continued to oversee the implementation of the 1996 peace agreements, the timeline for which extends to 2004. Although the Government had pledged to accelerate implementation after a meeting of the Consultative Group in February 2002, the Group concluded at its subsequent meeting in

May 2003 that insufficient progress had been made. Increased attacks on human rights defenders and judges, and persistent social unrest, were of particular concern. Conversely, renewed civil society activism in support of the peace agreements allowed some grounds for optimism.

31. I continued to provide my good offices to the search for a peaceful solution to the nearly 40-year-old conflict in Colombia. Despite the rupture in talks between the Government of Colombia and the two major guerrilla groups — the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia and the National Liberation Army — my Special Adviser on Colombia has continued, through regular contacts with the Government, guerrilla groups, civil society and the international community, to assist peacemaking efforts. In addition, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has worked with the United Nations country team and my Special Adviser to address the growing problem of displaced persons within the country. The expanding conflict, which is fuelled by funds from the illicit drug trade, constitutes a significant challenge for the United Nations organizations that are working to alleviate its adverse humanitarian effects and address its root causes.

32. Relations between India and Pakistan improved, and it was announced in May 2003 that the two countries would appoint High Commissioners to each other's capitals, restore rail, road and air links, and take other confidence-building measures. I hope that those measures will lead to the resumption of sustained dialogue and to real progress towards a peaceful settlement of the outstanding problems between these two neighbours, including over Jammu and Kashmir.

33. Despite a ceasefire agreement and several rounds of talks between the Government of Nepal and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), the emerging peace process is still fragile. The United Nations remains prepared to provide assistance to strengthen the process, including in the area of human rights. The United Nations system, through the Resident Coordinator and programmes such as UNDP and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), has reoriented humanitarian, reconstruction and development assistance to better support the peace process.

34. The peace process in Sri Lanka, which had begun to make encouraging progress after the ceasefire of February 2002, suffered a setback in April 2003, when the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam suspended participation in negotiations with the Government of Sri Lanka. I fully support the ongoing efforts by the Governments of Norway and Japan to further the peace process, and hope the talks will resume as soon as possible. The United Nations system, through the Resident Coordinator and in collaboration with the World Bank, will continue to support the process through reconstruction and development activities.

35. The implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement of August 2001 between the Bougainville parties and the Government of Papua New Guinea has made significant headway. Following the verification and notification by the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB) of the completion of stage II of the weapons disposal plan at the end of July 2003, the constitutional amendments providing for the establishment of an autonomous Bougainville Government and a referendum on Bougainville's future political status have become operational. While UNPOB is expected to successfully complete its mandate by the end of 2003, the United Nations system and the donor community will need to continue providing assistance to the parties in the implementation of the Agreement.

36. I am gratified to note the continuing cooperation between the United Nations and the Government of Indonesia in support of the latter's pursuit of political, economic and social reforms. I remain convinced that Indonesia's national unity and territorial integrity can best be ensured through respect for democratic norms and the promotion of human rights. Accordingly, I have called upon all parties to the conflict in Aceh to uphold their obligations to protect civilians in armed conflict and to resume dialogue. I have also been following closely the Indonesian Ad Hoc Human Rights Tribunal for Crimes Committed in East Timor; I firmly believe that the perpetrators of serious human rights violations in 1999 in Timor-Leste (then East Timor) must be brought to justice.

37. I have been paying particular attention to the crisis on the Korean Peninsula that was triggered by an alleged admission in October 2002 by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it was carrying out a uranium-enrichment programme. This was followed by the withdrawal of the Democratic People's Republic of

Korea from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and by its claim to possess nuclear weapons. A legacy of deep mutual mistrust and hostility between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and other States, particularly the United States of America, has contributed to continuing tensions in the region. In January 2003, I became concerned that the humanitarian pipeline to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea might dry up. I dispatched my Personal Envoy to the country in January and March 2003 to help prevent a humanitarian disaster and prepare the way for a negotiated settlement. My Envoy had extensive and useful discussions with senior government officials in Pyongyang, as well as in other capitals concerned about developments on the Korean Peninsula. The dangers inherent in the Korean situation cast an ominous cloud over the security and stability of the region. The international consensus that the Korean Peninsula should be free of nuclear weapons and the commitment of all major players to finding a peaceful solution to the crisis allow for guarded optimism that a comprehensive resolution can be achieved. I shall continue to lend my full support to the multilateral diplomatic process launched in April 2003 in Beijing and expanded thereafter.

38. My Special Envoy to Myanmar undertook his ninth and tenth missions to Yangon in November 2002 and June 2003, respectively, to try to facilitate national reconciliation and democratization. My Envoy met the major political actors — leaders of the State Peace and Development Council, officials of the National League for Democracy (NLD) and ethnic minority political parties. The incident of 30 May 2003, which resulted in the detention of many NLD officials, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, renewed concerns about progress towards national reconciliation and the eventual transition to democracy. I have urged and will continue to urge the Government of Myanmar to heed the call by the international community, including the countries of the region, and release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other NLD leaders without further delay.

Peacekeeping and peace-building

39. Peacekeeping and peace-building are two sides of the same coin, providing as they do assistance to societies emerging from conflict so that they can consolidate their fragile peace. Whether through the dispatch of Blue Helmets or by authorizing the deployment of a multinational force, the United Nations has actively supported the transition from war to peace in many parts of the world. Moreover, through its peace-building efforts, the Organization and the broader United Nations system have provided political, humanitarian and development assistance to meet immediate emergency and reconstruction needs, as well as to establish viable institutions. I am glad to note the successful completion of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka, which demonstrate that the United Nations can complete complex mandates within a realistic time frame.

40. On 4 December 2002, the Security Council authorized a gradual increase in the troop strength of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) to 8,700, with a view to contributing to the disarmament, demobilization and repatriation of foreign armed groups. On 17 December, the participants in the inter-Congolese dialogue signed a Global and All-Inclusive Agreement and, on 2 April 2003, the Final Act, formally endorsing that Agreement, the Transitional Constitution and 36 resolutions that had been adopted at an earlier session of the inter-Congolese dialogue, in April 2002, thus paving the way for the formation of a Transitional Government. In May 2003, in view of the progress made at the national level, I presented to the Security Council a comprehensive strategy for the role of MONUC in support of the transition. Despite the political progress, however, fighting continued in the eastern regions of the country; it was especially intense in Ituri and the Kivus, where massacres and widespread human rights violations were committed. In response to the rapid deterioration of security in Ituri, and recognizing the threat it posed to the peace process, the Security Council on 30 May authorized the deployment of an Interim Emergency Multinational Force in Bunia, in the Ituri region. The Force was fielded by the European Union, with France as the lead nation. The deployment of that Force, until 1 September 2003, offered the United Nations and the international community the opportunity to work in the meantime to strengthen local political institutions and ensure that the humanitarian crisis did not continue to deteriorate. The Transitional Government was formally installed in July 2003, with the swearing-in of the four new Vice-Presidents, the Ministers and the Deputy Ministers. By resolution 1493 (2003) of 28 July, acting under Chapter VII of Charter of the United Nations, the Security

Council authorized an increase in the Mission's strength to 10,800.

41. In September 2002, Côte d'Ivoire was plunged into a civil conflict when a group of soldiers, in an attempted coup, simultaneously attacked military installations in Abidjan, Bouaké and Korhogo. While security forces loyal to the Government quickly regained control of Abidjan, the rebels prevailed in the northern half of the country. Mediation efforts by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) resulted, in October 2002, in a ceasefire agreement monitored by French and ECOWAS forces. In January 2003, the Ivorian parties signed the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement, which called for the creation of a Government of National Reconciliation whose main tasks would be to prepare a timetable for credible and transparent national elections, restructure the defence and security forces and disarm all armed groups. In May 2003, the Security Council authorized the establishment of the United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (MINUCI), with a mandate to facilitate the implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement, complementing the operations of the French and ECOWAS forces. The Mission's deployment has proceeded successfully, an initial group of 26 military liaison officers having arrived in Abidjan on 23 June 2003. Throughout the peacemaking process, my Special Representative for West Africa played a critical supporting role in the international efforts that resulted in the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement.

42. The United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) began to implement its drawdown plan, which provides for the total withdrawal of the Mission by the end of 2004, while continuing to assist the Government of Sierra Leone in consolidating peace. The pace of the Mission's drawdown is guided by the ability of the security forces of Sierra Leone to guarantee the security of the country. While the Government took commendable steps to consolidate its authority, its capacity to deliver basic services to the population in the provinces has been limited. The Government has taken measures to restore its control over diamond mining but significant illegal mining persists. The resettlement of internally displaced persons was completed in December 2002, while the repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees from neighbouring countries continues. UNHCR, UNDP and the World Bank have been working to ensure recovery at the local level, to strengthen the Government's capacity to deliver services and to provide economic alternatives for former combatants and refugees. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court have started functioning and the Security Council has authorized the deployment of 170 civilian police to UNAMSIL to assist in the training of the local police.

43. During the reporting period, the United Nations Peace-building Support Offices in the Central African Republic, Guinea-Bissau and Liberia intensified their efforts to facilitate the promotion of good governance and national reconciliation, the consolidation of democratic processes and the mobilization of international support for the formulation and implementation of reconstruction and development programmes. The respective United Nations country teams have been closely associated with this endeavour. The lack of cooperation on the part of governing parties, however, and the failure by national stakeholders to resolve their major differences on governance issues have seriously hampered the United Nations peace-building efforts, especially in the Central African Republic and Liberia.

44. Regrettably, the situation in Liberia took a dangerous turn as renewed fighting erupted in Monrovia in flagrant violation of a ceasefire agreement signed by the warring parties in Accra on 17 June 2003. In addition to inflicting a severe blow to the promising prospects for the restoration of peace in the country, hostilities led to a humanitarian catastrophe and threatened stability in the entire West African subregion. The United Nations, together with other principal international players, has actively supported the sustained peacemaking efforts of the leaders of ECOWAS. On 28 June 2003, I addressed a letter to the President of the Security Council, with the request that the Council take urgent action to authorize, under Chapter VII of the Charter, the deployment to Liberia of a highly trained and well-equipped multinational force, under the lead of a Member State, to prevent a major humanitarian tragedy and to stabilize the situation in the country. In anticipation of a greater United Nations involvement in these efforts, I appointed a Special Representative for Liberia with the main tasks of coordinating United Nations activities, supporting the emerging transitional arrangements and leading an eventual United Nations peacekeeping operation in that country. On 1 August, the Security Council, by resolution 1497 (2003), authorized

Member States to establish a Multinational Force in Liberia and declared its readiness to establish a follow-on, longer-term United Nations stabilization force to relieve the Multinational Force. On 4 August, ECOWAS elements of the Multinational Force started deploying in Liberia with United Nations support. To facilitate the cessation of hostilities and the conclusion of a comprehensive peace agreement, President Charles Taylor relinquished power and left Liberia on 11 August, in keeping with the commitment he had made at the opening of the peace talks in Accra on 4 June. I welcomed the subsequent signing by the Liberian parties, on 18 August, also in Accra, of a comprehensive peace agreement, and called on all concerned to seize this opportunity to work together to restore peace and stability in the country.

45. The United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea continued to support the peace process by monitoring the Temporary Security Zone; providing logistical support to the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission; and delivering quick-impact projects and coordinating humanitarian assistance in the Temporary Security Zone and adjacent areas. The Mine Action Coordination Centre has continued to coordinate all mine-related activities within the Zone and to clear access routes to boundary pillar sites. It is important that both parties cooperate fully with the Boundary Commission to ensure the demarcation of the border without undue delay. It is equally important for the parties to initiate a political dialogue, in particular to develop mechanisms to resolve residual and future disputes peacefully.

46. In March 2003, just before the United States-led invasion of Iraq from Kuwait, the mandate of the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) was suspended and most of its staff evacuated. UNIKOM maintained a small rear headquarters in Kuwait City to provide a peacekeeping presence, undertake political and military liaison functions, and support United Nations humanitarian assistance programmes for Iraq. While much of UNIKOM headquarters at Umm Qasr and other infrastructure were destroyed in the conflict, Camp Khor, on the Kuwaiti side of the border, reopened in May to support humanitarian operations. On 3 July, the Security Council, in resolution 1490 (2003), noted that UNIKOM had successfully fulfilled its mandate from 1991 to 2003 and extended it for a final period of three months. The Mission's remaining personnel are preparing for the liquidation of UNIKOM and transferring many of its removable assets to other missions.

47. The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon continued to monitor the Blue Line between Israel and Lebanon and to liaise with the parties to avert or contain tensions. There were few violent incidents and only minor ground violations of the Line. Frequent Israeli violations of Lebanese air space, however, drew retaliatory anti-aircraft fire from Hizbollah. I have continued to remind the parties to respect fully the Blue Line. The Lebanese armed forces increased their activity in the south, but the Government of Lebanon has yet to take all necessary steps to restore its full authority there. The Mine Action Coordination Centre coordinated the clearance of over 4 million square metres of mined area in southern Lebanon.

48. The Government of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste worked to strengthen its institutions and security, drawing upon the assistance provided by the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) and by United Nations agencies. The Government's civil administration and police force progressively assumed greater responsibility for the management of day-to-day affairs in their respective areas. In an important gesture of commitment to human rights principles, the Parliament of Timor-Leste ratified six core human rights treaties and four optional protocols in December 2002. However, in response to rioting in Dili in December 2002 and violent attacks by armed elements in January and February 2003, the Security Council decided to slow the downsizing schedule for the military and police components of UNMISET.

49. In Afghanistan, the security situation has continued to challenge the implementation of the Bonn Agreement of December 2001. Progress has nevertheless, been made. All the commissions called for in the Agreement have been formed and have begun their work in their respective areas of human rights, constitutional and judicial reform, and the reorganization of the civil service. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and other United Nations entities have been providing critical support to those commissions. The Transitional Administration adopted concrete measures to extend its control over the country. These included launching a new currency and formulating a national development budget. In May 2003, the Administration secured an agreement

with important provincial governors and commanders that called for the centralization of customs revenues and prohibited provincial leaders from simultaneously holding civil and military positions, but those commitments have been only partially implemented. The Transitional Administration has placed security sector reform at the centre of its agenda. This includes the reform of the Ministry of Defence to make it nationally representative, as a precondition for the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plan. The signing of a declaration on good-neighbourly relations by Afghanistan and neighbouring States on 22 December 2002 was a further step towards the objective of consolidating stability and security in the region.

50. The United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) continued to monitor compliance with the ceasefire agreement of 1994. The Group of Friends, under the chairmanship of the United Nations, met at Geneva in February and July 2003, to review progress towards a comprehensive settlement and to consider options for taking the peace process forward. The Georgian and Abkhaz sides took part in the second meeting. My Special Representative, with the support of the Group of Friends, remained in close contact with the parties to build on the momentum generated by those two meetings, as well as the meeting of President Putin and President Shevardnadze in March 2003, particularly in the areas of economic cooperation and the return of refugees and internally displaced persons. My Special Representative also supported efforts to build confidence and advance towards a comprehensive settlement of the conflict, on the basis of the paper entitled "Basic Principles for the Distribution of Competencies between Tbilisi and Sukhumi" and its letter of transmittal. I remain concerned about security in the Kodori Valley, where four UNOMIG personnel were held hostage for six days in June 2003, the sixth such incident since the establishment of the Mission in 1993. None of the perpetrators of those acts, or those responsible for shooting down a helicopter in 2001, have ever been identified and brought to justice.

51. The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) continued to support the establishment of democratic provisional institutions of self-government, as foreseen by the Constitutional Framework for Provisional Self-Government in Kosovo. The gradual transfer of the non-reserved responsibilities listed in chapter 5 of the Constitutional Framework from UNMIK to the provisional institutions continued, at a pace that took into account the capacity of those institutions to assume such responsibilities. The overall authority of UNMIK and the reserved responsibilities listed in chapter 8 of the Constitutional Framework will not be transferred. The Mission, with support from UNDP, maintained efforts to combat organized crime and to create the basis for a viable market economy. It also increased its efforts to foster conditions for minority return and to resolve property right claims by displaced persons. UNMIK continued to seek the resolution of issues that need to be addressed with authorities in Belgrade and encouraged a direct dialogue on practical matters between Belgrade and Pristina.

52. The United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina successfully completed its work in December 2002, having established State-level law enforcement institutions and transformed a 40,000 strong war-time militia into a 16,000 strong professional police force. Remaining responsibilities relating to the reform of the police were transferred to the European Union Police Mission. The United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka also completed its tasks in December 2002, having helped to shield this strategically important area from the fighting in the region and to create the space for a political solution to the dispute.

53. Building on last year's efforts to enhance the strategic deployment stocks at Brindisi, the Secretariat this year improved its capacity to deploy staff with the development of a rapid deployment roster for civilian personnel. The Civilian Police Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations also established a 100-person roster of dedicated professionals available at short notice. I am most grateful for the cooperation of Member States in this regard. Furthermore, the Division, in collaboration with other United Nations entities, enhanced its capacity to address policing, judicial and corrections matters by establishing a Criminal Law and Judicial Advisory Unit early in 2003.

The United Nations and regional organizations

54. The United Nations continues to work with and rely on regional organizations for the advancement of common goals such as international peace and security,

development and respect for human rights. The biennial high-level meetings of the United Nations and regional organizations, a forum inaugurated in 1994, have been instrumental in strengthening cooperation, especially in the areas of conflict prevention and peace-building. In the light of the increasing need for a joint response to challenges to peace and security around the world, I convened the fifth high-level meeting in July 2003, on the theme "New challenges to peace and security, including international terrorism". The conclusions of the meeting, which I intend to make available for wider distribution, confirmed the keen interest of the participants in jointly confronting the new challenges and in meeting more frequently to develop common strategies and policies.

55. During the period under review, the United Nations forged a number of innovative partnerships with regional organizations. For example, as mentioned earlier, the European Union and the United Nations recently combined their efforts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where a European Union force was deployed in June 2003 under the authority of the Security Council to keep the peace in the Ituri region. Similarly, in Afghanistan, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization agreed to assume, in August 2003, the leadership of the International Security Assistance Force operating under a Security Council mandate. In the area of development, the signature in April 2003 of a Framework Agreement with the European Commission makes it easier for the United Nations to access Commission funds in the joint pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals.

56. The United Nations also continued to cooperate closely with the African Union and subregional organizations in Africa to assist in the management and resolution of conflicts. The African Chiefs of Defence Staff and the Union's Executive Council, assisted by the United Nations, adopted a number of proposals to enhance Africa's peacekeeping capacity. In addition, my Special Representative for West Africa, with the support of United Nations agencies and the Secretariat, worked closely with ECOWAS to develop an integrated subregional approach to address the challenges facing West African States. At the Security Council's request, I sent a multidisciplinary assessment mission to Central Africa in June 2003 to seek ways for the United Nations to enhance its cooperation with subregional institutions towards achieving sustainable peace. A representative of ECOWAS joined the mission. For its part, UNDP has been developing a comprehensive programme of support for the African Union in building its capacity for conflict management.

57. In Asia, I welcome the increasing contacts and cooperation between the secretariats of the United Nations and the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) on matters relating to regional peace and security. In February 2003, the third regional workshop on conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace-building in South-East Asia was held in Singapore, focusing on ASEAN and United Nations experiences in anticipating and mediating conflicts. In Latin America, I have welcomed and supported, since their inception, the tireless mediation efforts launched by the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States, concerning the situation in Venezuela and that in Haiti. In the Pacific region, I am pleased to note the increased cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum.

Electoral assistance

58. Electoral assistance is seen by the United Nations as a tool for conflict prevention. A timely and well-executed electoral process which is transparent and inclusive can prevent an increase in tension and violence that could otherwise result from dissatisfaction in the face of real or perceived electoral irregularities. For example, in response to a request from the Palestinian Authority, the United Nations deployed two electoral teams to help establish the Palestinian Central Electoral Commission and to prepare for a voter registration exercise. It did so to enable the Commission to adequately carry out transparent and efficient elections or a referendum when called upon to do so under the road map. This is to ensure that the peace process would not lose momentum for lack of a credible voters register or because of an inadequately prepared Electoral Commission. Moreover, a senior electoral adviser was put in place to counsel the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process on the impact of the electoral process on the implementation of the road map.

59. The limited capacity of the Jamaican authorities to properly respond to electoral complaints had given rise to violence in previous elections in Jamaica. To meet the Government's request for assistance in preventing a repetition of violent incidents during the

new electoral period, the United Nations focused on enhancing the legal and investigative capacities of the Jamaican electoral authorities and Jamaica's Political Ombudsperson, so as to enable them to deal with electoral appeals and complaints. While the impact of this assistance is difficult to quantify, no deaths were attributed to the parliamentary elections held late in 2002.

60. From September 2002 to July 2003, the United Nations received 32 official requests for electoral assistance. Positive responses were provided to 20 of those requests, nine remain under consideration and three could not be fulfilled.

Terrorism

61. Terrorism continues to pose a major threat to international peace and security. The Counter-Terrorism Committee, established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), continued to review reports from Member States on the implementation of relevant measures to suppress and prevent terrorism. It also continued to facilitate the provision to States of the assistance they required to comply with their obligations under resolution 1373 (2001). The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime launched, in October 2002, the Global Programme against Terrorism, as a framework for its operational activities in this field, and obtained the approval of the General Assembly to strengthen the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the Centre for International Crime Prevention. The Department of Public Information will ensure that the Organization's principled positions and activities relating to terrorism obtain broad coverage.

62. Countering the financing of terrorism has become a principal area of focus for the international community. Assistance to Governments in identifying, tracing and seizing illicit assets increases the ability of States to confront both conventional criminality and terrorism. Assistance provided in this area by the Office on Drugs and Crime includes legislative drafting and capacity-building for investigators, prosecutors and the financial sector, as well as the establishment and strengthening of financial intelligence units — which together form the basis for targeting money-laundering and terrorist financing.

63. While we are vigorously pursuing the struggle against terrorism, it is important to make sure that the dignity of individuals and their fundamental freedoms, as well as democratic practices and the due process of law, are not trampled on. To this end, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights continues to emphasize the importance of respecting human rights in the context of counter-terrorism efforts and has strengthened contacts between the United Nations human rights bodies and the Counter-Terrorism Committee. In my public pronouncements, I have consistently stressed that there is no trade-off between human rights and security: respecting human rights must be a fundamental element in the fight against terrorism. Promoting values of tolerance and the dialogue among civilizations is also of paramount importance.

Disarmament

64. The year 2003 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the convening of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Yet the body of multilateral disarmament norms has been slowly eroded as a result of weakened international commitment, while the structures set up to deliberate and negotiate further measures remain at a standstill. I am particularly concerned with the prolonged stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament. Lack of agreement on its programme of work has again blocked substantive work, even on issues where there is consensus to begin negotiations. The Conference must be allowed to play its mandated role as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body.

65. Developments in 2003 heightened the concern of the world community that nuclear, biological or chemical weapons might be used by State or non-State actors. Universal adherence to, and full and effective compliance with, negotiated multilateral agreements are powerful tools in the battle against the use and proliferation of such weapons. The danger that weapons of mass destruction might fall into the hands of terrorists has been a major global concern. Concerted efforts to promote disarmament, non-proliferation and the security of weapon-related materials are essential for preventing terrorists from obtaining such weapons.

66. I welcomed the entry into force of the Moscow Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions between the Russian Federation and the United States of America in June 2003. Further steps to make reductions in

strategic nuclear weapons irreversible, transparent and verifiable would greatly strengthen international peace and security. At the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, States parties reaffirmed that the Treaty remained the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for nuclear disarmament. Nevertheless, the decision of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to withdraw from the Treaty, the first such decision since the Treaty's entry into force 33 years ago, particularly undermined confidence in its effective implementation. While there has been a marked increase in adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, further efforts are needed to ensure that that Treaty enters into force.

67. The First Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects was held in New York in July 2003. After just two years of activity, 99 States were able to present national status reports. I am encouraged by the many initiatives being taken at the national, regional and international levels to stem the illicit trade in these weapons. The Meeting confirmed the need for partnerships at all of those levels, including with civil society, to assist States in implementing the Programme of Action adopted in 2001. The United Nations will continue do its part to encourage and assist States in their efforts to mitigate the impact on security, development and human rights of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

Sanctions

68. Sanctions remain an important tool in promoting and maintaining international peace and security. Their frequent use in the late 1990s has however, raised concerns about their effect on civilian populations and their consequences for the humanitarian situation in the targeted country or region. I have been encouraged by progress during the period under review towards refining international sanctions so that they maximize pressure on the intended targets while minimizing adverse effects on the general population and third States. The Security Council now frequently requests assessment reports on the humanitarian implications of current and possible future sanction regimes. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat has been mandated to carry out such assessments. In addition to the establishment of panels of experts and monitoring mechanisms, improved implementation of targeted sanctions also requires regular, accurate and transparent reporting by States. Such reporting helps sanctions committees to gauge the level of compliance and is useful in identifying technical assistance required by States to improve implementation. I was pleased to note that some of the findings from the Stockholm Process on the Implementation of Targeted Sanctions were reflected in the enhanced reporting requirements contained in Security Council resolution 1455 (2003). I wish to encourage further expert discussions on the potential use of targeted measures to prevent or contain conflict.

69. Sanctions were reinforced or expanded against Somalia and Liberia and members of the Taliban and al-Qa'idah. The Security Council lifted sanctions against UNITA, in view of the end of the war in Angola and the transformation of UNITA into a political party, and decided not to renew prohibitions against the import of rough diamonds from Sierra Leone, given that Government's full participation in the Kimberley Process. The Council also terminated all prohibitions relating to trade with Iraq, except with regard to the supply of arms.

Chapter II
Meeting humanitarian commitments

70. There have been significant improvements and disturbing setbacks in humanitarian affairs over the past year. While long-standing conflicts in Angola, Sierra Leone and the Sudan appear to be moving towards resolution, thus easing the humanitarian situation in those countries, outbreaks of fighting in Côte d'Ivoire, the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and Liberia have exacerbated the already devastating human suffering in those areas. Protracted conflicts in Colombia and the Occupied Palestinian Territory continue to give rise to grave concern. Numerous natural disasters have caused much suffering and loss of life, and in some places have wreaked havoc on populations already ravaged by war or infectious diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis and, especially, HIV/AIDS.

71. The United Nations system has sought to respond to the numerous humanitarian crises both equitably and efficiently, placing the principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality at the core of its efforts. Significant energies have been expended over the year in ensuring a more coherent and strategically coordinated humanitarian response, through further strengthening the consolidated appeals process and partnerships with recipient countries, non-governmental organizations and other international institutions.

The challenge of protecting and assisting refugees and displaced populations

72. Over the past year nascent peace processes in several previously war-torn countries have created opportunities to improve substantially the lives of many returning refugees and internally displaced persons. In Afghanistan, over 2 million refugees and 750,000 internally displaced persons returned home following the fall of the Taliban regime. In Angola, almost 130,000 refugees repatriated spontaneously from neighbouring countries and more than a million internally displaced persons returned to their villages. In Sierra Leone, some 75,000 refugees returned to their homes from Guinea and Liberia and nearly the entire population of internally displaced persons was returned or resettled by December 2002. In Sri Lanka, some 240,000 uprooted people returned to their home areas following the beginning of peace negotiations. The majority of the 170,000 persons from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia who had fled their homes in 2001 were able to return, signifying the end of the emergency.

73. Tragically, millions of refugees around the world remain affected by vicious cycles of conflict and upheaval, with little hope for return. In Africa alone, there were over 3 million persons in such "protracted" refugee situations, including from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Somalia and the Sudan. In Western Sahara, around 165,000 refugees continued to languish in camps more than a quarter of a century since the dispute began, still waiting for a political solution. Despite progress made in Afghanistan, over 1.1 million Afghan refugees remained in the Islamic Republic of Iran and 1.2 million in Pakistan. Overall, the global number of refugees was estimated in early 2003 to be some 10.3 million persons, a decrease of 1.7 million, or 14 per cent, compared with one year earlier. The total population of concern to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, including refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons, as well as those who returned during the year, increased slightly, from 19.8 million in early 2002 to some 20.5 million in early 2003. Whereas many refugees were able to return home, almost 300,000 additional persons were forced to flee their homes and became refugees in 2002, mainly from Burundi (29,000), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (39,000) and Liberia (105,000). The largest refugee outflows occurred in Africa. In West Africa, the conflicts in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia led to tragic displacements across the entire subregion and sparked instability in neighbouring countries, while also jeopardizing efforts at consolidating stability in Sierra Leone.

74. Although States have the primary responsibility for the well-being of their citizens, UNHCR has in recent years become more engaged in responding to situations where the protection needs of internally displaced persons mirror those of refugees. Over 6 million internally displaced persons continue to endure suffering and abuse in Burundi, Colombia and the

Sudan. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, optimism over successful peace negotiations was tempered by continuing bloodshed and displacement, in particular in the Ituri region. In Indonesia, the resumption of a military offensive against the separatist movement in Aceh also led to the displacement of thousands of people. There are currently some 370,000 internally displaced persons in the Russian Federation. The work of my Representative on Internally Displaced Persons has contributed significantly to gaining international attention and enhancing the response to the problem of internal displacement. The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, which were developed by my Representative and a team of legal experts, provide guidance to all pertinent actors and set forth the rights and guarantees applicable in all relevant phases, that is, during displacement, return, resettlement and reintegration. The Guiding Principles have increasingly been taken into account in the work of regional organizations and have been of assistance in the drafting of legislation on internal displacement in a number of countries. The Internal Displacement Unit of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, has maintained its focus on providing support to specific internal displacement crises, while promoting United Nations system-wide improvements in dealing with such crises. Training workshops and expert advice and guidance provided by the Unit, in collaboration with other humanitarian partners, have for example led to the expression of interest on the part of the authorities of the Sudan in developing a national policy on internally displaced people.

75. The return of refugees and displaced populations presents enormous challenges. Achieving sustainable solutions entails the arduous task of rebuilding shattered economies and finding gainful employment for populations who have known little but war. One approach, referred to as the "4 Rs" (repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction) brings humanitarian and development actors together in the context of post-conflict situations. In Sierra Leone and Sri Lanka, UNHCR and UNDP have been working to effectively target development and reintegration assistance to areas with high numbers of returnees. Special "4R" collaboration is under way in Afghanistan and Eritrea as well. A United Nations University study emphasizes that the management of refugee movements and protection of displaced people should be an integral part of conflict settlement, peace-building and regional security.

76. In developing countries that host refugees, lack of security has remained a major problem. Refugee camps and settlements have been infiltrated by armed elements. The forced recruitment of refugees, especially children — including those previously demobilized — by both government forces and rebel groups have also been of major concern. Such problems were particularly prevalent in the West Africa region over the past year. In Guinea, UNHCR was forced to move some 33,000 refugees from a camp near the Liberian border to a safer location some 250 miles away, following repeated raids by Liberian armed groups.

77. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNICEF and partner agencies have committed considerable resources over the year to improving the protection of refugee women and children. Girls and women have been routinely targeted by campaigns of gender-based violence, including rape, mutilation, prostitution, forced pregnancy and sexual slavery. In response to incidents of sexual and gender-based violence in refugee camps, a series of preventive and remedial measures were put in place, including investigation systems, recourse mechanisms and programmes of victim support. In Guinea, UNHCR and its non-governmental organization partners promoted the establishment of refugee associations in camps to enhance prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence. In Sierra Leone, a sensitization campaign was undertaken by UNICEF in all camps, in the communities surrounding the camps and in four interim care centres. Other measures taken in Sierra Leone included development of a community monitoring system and complaints mechanism in the camps, training of humanitarian workers on sexual abuse and exploitation and training for police in interviewing in cases of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation and domestic violence. UNICEF, the World Food Programme (WFP) and non-governmental organization partners have jointly spearheaded training of United Nations and non-governmental organization staff and partners in preventing and responding to sexual exploitation in six countries in southern Africa.

78. The period under review has seen new challenges to the protection of refugees, many of them linked to broader developments in the international arena.

Security concerns have led to new and stringent checks by States at entry points to their territories, making it increasingly difficult for asylum-seekers to gain access to asylum procedures. Many Governments seem to be succumbing to the temptation of applying discriminatory measures in order to limit the admission of all potential immigrants, including asylum-seekers. Cases of arbitrary detention have also become commonplace in some countries. As a result, public support for the asylum process has been undermined and refugees have faced unfair suspicion, prejudice and xenophobia. Recognizing that States have legitimate security concerns linked to the asylum-migration nexus, UNHCR has been exploring ways to work with Governments on those issues. The year 2002 witnessed the completion of the Global Consultations on International Protection, involving States, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, academics, legal practitioners and refugees. As a result of that process, an Agenda for Protection was adopted, reflecting a renewed commitment to address gaps in international protection. UNHCR, as part of its commitment to the process, launched the Convention Plus initiative, the purpose of which is to develop special arrangements that promote durable solutions and fairer burden-sharing.

Delivering humanitarian assistance and the challenge of underfunded emergencies

79. As I mentioned earlier, the consolidated appeals process continued to be strengthened as a strategic planning tool for the United Nations and its partners. During the reporting period, the United Nations and its partners produced 27 consolidated appeals for humanitarian assistance, requesting a total of $5.8 billion from the international community. The overall response to those appeals as at 21 July 2003 stood at 52 per cent. With the funds made available, even if not at the desired level, the United Nations was able to provide food, shelter, medicine and other life-saving assistance to 45 million victims of conflict, drought and other emergencies.

80. The donor community has generously supported WFP humanitarian operations, providing almost $1.8 billion over the course of 2002. However, not all WFP operations were fully funded and the significant shortfalls compromised assistance efforts in places such as Colombia, Eritrea, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the Sudan and Tajikistan. In addition, the benefits of food aid can only be fully realized when combined with other programmes. Adequate funding for non-food assistance is therefore critical to ensuring the success of humanitarian action. Such non-food assistance must include support for the restoration of livelihoods, including in sectors such as agriculture. Underfunding of the emergency and early rehabilitation activities of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) jeopardized its ability to assist displaced or other disaster-affected persons in recovering their productive capacity.

81. Health sector programmes in the consolidated appeals remained chronically under-resourced, receiving on average only 10 per cent of the resources requested. Nevertheless, the World Health Organization (WHO) worked to fight a malaria epidemic, meningitis and cholera in Burundi, helped manage a yellow fever epidemic in Guinea and was able to respond to an outbreak of Lassa fever in the refugee camps in Sierra Leone within 48 hours. The severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) was the first new disease to emerge in the twenty-first century. When it was first identified by WHO, in February 2003, it was apparent that the disease spread rapidly within hospitals and was being transported by aircraft, that no therapy was effective and that SARS could inflict enormous damage to economies. WHO coordinated global action to identify the cause of SARS, control outbreaks and prevent the disease from becoming established as it moved from country to country. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) was able to provide basic maternity care and HIV prevention for internally displaced people and refugees in a dozen countries. However, because donor support for these reproductive health needs was insufficient and, moreover, concentrated on a few highly visible emergencies, assistance for many populations facing conflict was inadequate. Adequate attention to health is crucial in dealing with humanitarian emergencies and requires coordinated action and timely provision of the necessary funds by the donors.

82. Underfunding has a particularly direct impact on the lives of children and women. For example, low funding over the past year meant that UNICEF work to provide emergency health assistance in the Republic of the Congo had to focus on high-risk areas and not the entire country. Whereas 1.2 million children should

have been vaccinated against measles, only 200,000 were covered, given the low level of resources received. In education, of the 1,700 schools that needed to be re-equipped, only 120 could be covered. In the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, only limited types of medicine could be made available, mainly for the treatment of childhood illnesses.

83. The general shortfall in resources experienced by UNHCR over the year has continued to impede efforts to provide much needed protection and material assistance, in particular in sub-Saharan Africa. At the end of 2002, its overall budget of $829 million was underfunded by some $100 million, which has led in many cases to the scaling back of already reduced assistance and services to more than 4 million refugees and other people of concern to UNHCR, especially in Africa, where the needs are the greatest.

84. Though funding constraints limited the scale of their operations, WHO, UNICEF and their non-governmental partners carried out measles and vitamin A campaigns in Afghanistan, Angola, Burundi, Somalia and elsewhere. Between January 2002 and June 2003, 15.3 million children between six months and 12 years of age were vaccinated against measles and received vitamin A supplements in Afghanistan (93 per cent coverage), preventing an estimated 35,000 child deaths. In Angola, between September 2002 and June 2003, 7.2 million children between nine months and 14 years of age were vaccinated against measles and received vitamin A supplements (95 per cent coverage), averting an estimated 10,000 child deaths. United Nations bodies and their partners also organized successful national immunization days for the eradication of polio in Afghanistan, Liberia, Somalia and the Sudan. Between September 2002 and May 2003, 34 million doses of oral polio vaccine were administered to 6.5 million children under five years of age in Afghanistan, through different rounds of national and subnational immunization days. It is encouraging to note that there has been only one reported case of polio to date this year in Afghanistan.

85. The past year saw a number of important achievements in Afghanistan, allowing for significant economic progress to take place. Higher rainfall in some parts of the country and heavy snowfall resulted in improved harvests, with more people now being able to meet their basic food needs. Significant numbers of Afghans, especially women and children, however, remained vulnerable and continued to rely on food aid. In 2002, WFP fed over 323,700 children in Afghanistan through the back-to-school programme, supported the return and resettlement of 330,000 families and helped to strengthen the civil service through the provision of salary supplements to 251,000 civil servants. Despite marked improvement, however, security continues to be a major constraint on humanitarian action in Afghanistan.

86. In the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, a government assessment of the nutritional status of children made in collaboration with UNICEF and WFP indicated a significant improvement between 1998 and 2002. Food assistance had contributed directly to improving the nutritional status of vulnerable groups, though the needs of those groups remained high. The situation could deteriorate again. WFP was forced to suspend distributions to 3 million beneficiaries as a result of funding shortages at the end of 2002.

87. In Angola, the end of the conflict in April 2002 led to the mass return of internally displaced persons and refugees and the opening up of previously inaccessible areas. The Government estimates that 2.3 million internally displaced persons have returned to their homes, while another 1.4 million remain displaced. WFP has been able to increase the number of people it assists by over 80 per cent, substantially supporting the consolidation of the newly realized peace, and UNICEF has expanded school access.

88. The humanitarian situation continued to worsen in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular its eastern region. Access to the most vulnerable remained the main challenge, driven by lack of security, harassment by the conflicting parties and poor infrastructure. Violence against civilians was rampant, in particular sexual violence against women and girls. UNICEF, together with non-governmental organization partners, provided psychological assistance to almost 1,000 women survivors of sexual violence in South Kivu and strengthened community support networks. UNFPA worked to sensitize military and police leaders to the need to prevent gender violence.

89. In Eritrea and Ethiopia, drought has again sharply increased the number of people in need of relief assistance. Such assistance is necessary to save lives, prevent mass migration and preserve the assets of farmers and pastoralists. In response to the increasingly alarming situation, in June 2003 I appointed a Special Envoy for the Humanitarian Crisis in the Horn of

Africa, who visited Eritrea and Ethiopia in July 2003. While persisting drought conditions and their long-term effects continued to increase the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance in both countries, Ethiopia has been particularly hard hit. Despite generous donor support, which secured almost 100 per cent of funding requirements of the consolidated inter-agency appeal for Ethiopia for 2003, malnutrition levels in many areas of the country continued to increase and, by July 2003, it was determined that an additional 2.3 million people would require assistance until the end of the year, thus bringing the total number of beneficiaries to over 13.1 million.

90. The humanitarian crisis in southern Africa threatens to be one of the most severe and complex humanitarian disasters of the last decade, the result of a combination of erratic rainfall, poverty, economic decline, inadequate food security policies and high rates of HIV/AIDS infection. During 2002, the number of people at risk of severe food insecurity rose from 12.8 million to 14.4 million. Generous donor support enabled WFP to mobilize capacity rapidly to help millions of people in Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. United Nations entities have been working together in the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination and Support Office to raise awareness and emphasize the need to move beyond the traditional emergency response in order to find durable solutions.

91. My Special Envoy for Humanitarian Needs in Southern Africa has played an important role in raising donor awareness to the unique nature of the crisis, the first major emergency in which high rates of HIV/AIDS infection have played a significant role in exacerbating food insecurity and malnutrition. The HIV/AIDS epidemic has introduced a new complexity into humanitarian crises, which requires rethinking of humanitarian assistance. The lessons learned from the regional response indicate not only that methods for food security analysis, food rations and/or nutrition-related activities should be adjusted, but also that such efforts need to be combined with emergency development action in the social and health sectors.

92. Old and new conflicts in West Africa put considerable strain on humanitarian intervention efforts during the past year and endangered the stability of fragile neighbouring countries. In a worrisome trend, both the escalation of the conflict in Liberia and renewed fighting in Côte d'Ivoire were marked by a blatant disregard for the protection of civilians, increase in recruitment and use of children in armed conflict and contempt for humanitarian work. In an environment without law and order, humanitarian efforts have proved extremely difficult, especially in Liberia, where the escalation of the country's civil war in March 2003 resulted in a humanitarian crisis of immense proportions. Sustained combat in the capital city of Monrovia led to a complete breakdown of law and order, the displacement of about 50 per cent of the city's population and the evacuation of all United Nations international personnel. The arrival of peacekeepers in August 2003, as well as the transitional political arrangements, have provided a new opportunity for humanitarian agencies to assess the situation and resume relief operations for the most vulnerable groups. On 6 August 2003, the United Nations launched a revised consolidated inter-agency appeal for Liberia, requesting $69 million to respond to the increased humanitarian needs. Efforts are under way to strengthen the overall capacity of the humanitarian community to deal effectively with the situation.

93. In Iraq, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs played a key role in the establishment and maintenance of humanitarian coordination mechanisms both prior to and after the onset of the war in Ma[illegible] 2003, at the field and headquarters levels. WFP succeeded in dispatching over 1.13 million tons of food commodities into Iraq between April and June 2003. WFP also managed a United Nations joint logistics centre for the Iraq crisis, coordinating the logistics capabilities of humanitarian agencies, and provided common airlift services for the relief operation by managing the United Nations humanitarian air service. WHO led efforts in the health sector through the supply of badly needed drugs and other medical items, public health programmes and rehabilitation of health facilities. UNICEF led the United Nations emergency efforts in the provision of non-food assistance, including critical supplies for child survival, supplemental nutrition and basic education materials, as well as in the provision of emergency water supplies, in collaboration with non-governmental organization partners. UNDP installed generators and rehabilitated electricity facilities that provided power supply for the operation of hospitals, water-pumping stations and sewage-treatment plants.

94. The oil-for-food programme, administered by the Office of the Iraq Programme, has continued to deliver supplies to meet the basic humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people. Prior to the war, the programme, among other achievements, had succeeded in reducing by half malnutrition rates among children under the age of five. In its resolution 1483 (2003), the Security Council stipulated that the programme should be phased out by 21 November 2003. Until that time, the United Nations and its entities and programmes, in coordination with the Coalition Provisional Authority and the emerging Iraqi authorities, will continue to review and prioritize contracts, as well as facilitate the shipment of civilian goods to Iraq from a delivery pipeline valued at some $10 billion. Separately, on 28 March 2003, the United Nations launched a flash appeal for dealing with the Iraq crisis, seeking $2.2 billion. The flash appeal was revised in June 2003, when outstanding requirements of $259 million were presented, reflecting resources already made available by donors and through the oil-for-food programme, as well as new priorities that emerged after the end of major hostilities.

95. The United Nations Development Group has been working, in collaboration with the Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, under the overall coordination of my Special Representative for Iraq, to identify priorities for Iraq's reconstruction through a joint needs assessment. That exercise is being carried out bearing in mind issues of gender, human rights, environment and capacity-building. The United Nations Development Group has also convened a donor liaison group, consisting of over 50 members who regularly share information on the needs assessment process and on the donor conference on the reconstruction of Iraq scheduled for October 2003.

96. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the humanitarian situation has yet to show signs of improvement following the parties' embarking on implementation of the Quartet's road map in June 2003. For most of the past year, the situation has been increasingly desperate and the local population has been facing unprecedented levels of hardship. Closures and curfews have crippled the economy, plunging 1.3 million Palestinians into poverty. Military operations have left over 10,000 homeless. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has been delivering emergency assistance to over one million affected Palestinians, including food aid, shelter reconstruction and employment creation. Heavy restrictions on movement in the Occupied Palestinian Territory have posed serious obstacles to the operations of UNRWA and other international agencies. At the same time, UNRWA received only $37.3 million in funding against an appeal for $94 million to cover emergency operations between January and July 2003. Despite a $37.5 million shortfall in its 2003 regular budget as at 30 June, UNRWA continued to deliver regular education, health and relief and social services to a population of over 4 million registered Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. WHO played a key role in coordinating the health sector and in providing technical assistance in key domains, such as nutrition and mental health. It also advocated for access and the right to health of the Palestinian population. The UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People provided some emergency assistance, in addition to major employment and technical assistance.

Natural disaster management: responding to emergencies and building capacity

97. Severe floods recurred across Asia between September and November 2002. Serious damage was caused by cyclones in the Pacific region in January 2003. In May 2003, earthquakes occurred in Algeria and Turkey and torrential rains led to the most serious flooding and landslides in Sri Lanka since 1947. Severe and continual rainfall that began in late June 2003 has led to flooding in a number of provinces in China, affecting 130 million people and resulting in the evacuation of more than 3 million from their homes and the death of over 800 persons. Droughts continued to affect large parts of the population in African and Asian countries, compounding very challenging situations also associated with conflicts and lethal epidemics such as HIV/AIDS. From 1 September 2002 to 8 August 2003, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs responded to 75 natural disasters, mobilizing international assistance through appeals and situation reports, providing emergency cash grants, channelling grants from donor Governments and fielding United Nations disaster assessment and coordination missions.

98. The efforts of the United Nations to reduce the impact of natural hazards through mitigating vulnerability and disaster risks have been undermined by limited funding. Humanitarian donors shy away from channelling monies to activities with a longer-term impact, while development donors have not yet fully assumed that responsibility. Nevertheless, advocacy efforts have ensured heightened awareness of the imperative to reduce risk and vulnerability to natural hazards and other technological and environmental disasters in order to achieve sustainable development. The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, coordinated by its secretariat, has increasingly been utilized to guide commitment and action by United Nations entities, other international and regional organizations and Governments. The special emphasis on developing subregional and national plans in Africa has been further strengthened by the creation of an International Strategy for Disaster Reduction outreach programme for Africa and by activities undertaken jointly by the secretariat, UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and others. Regional consultations have been carried out in Asia, Europe and the South Pacific and are further planned in Africa and the Americas. UNDP has contributed to increased capacity for disaster reduction in 33 countries worldwide, including early warning systems, strengthening of national disaster offices, risk reduction tools and strategies, support to legislative systems and strengthening knowledge networks. Other United Nations entities are also gradually developing substantive disaster reduction programmes and activities within the framework of the International Strategy.

Coordination of assistance and the protection of civilians in armed conflict

99. Effective humanitarian responses require well-managed coordination and rapid resource mobilization. Working through the inter-agency system, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs strives to ensure an adequate response to humanitarian crises by mobilizing resources, promoting access to vulnerable populations and undertaking field coordination. Furthermore, the United Nations system as a whole is committed to ensuring a smooth transition from provision of humanitarian assistance to development activities in post-conflict situations.

100. An example of an effective coordinated approach to a humanitarian crisis was the extensive inter-agency contingency preparations for the Iraq conflict. Well in advance of the outbreak of the war, a regional humanitarian coordination office was established, from which the humanitarian response was planned and coordinated in close collaboration with non-governmental organizations.

101. There has been considerable activity on the part of the Organization over the past year towards mainstreaming protection issues into the policies and decision-making processes of Member States and the United Nations system at large, including in the discussions of the Security Council. In November 2002, in my third report to the Security Council on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, I highlighted three emerging challenges: (a) gender-based violence in humanitarian crises and conflict situations; (b) the harmful consequences of the commercial exploitation of conflict; and (c) the escalating threat of global terrorism.

102. The continuing challenge is to identify and utilize more effective means of implementing the principles and policies that are in place, to mainstream them into the humanitarian work of the United Nations system and to translate them into specific measures in the field. Some important steps have been taken in that regard. For example, United Nations entities in Afghanistan, Burundi and Iraq have used the aide-memoire formulated by the Security Council (S/PRST/2002/6, annex) to put together an active collaborative framework for the protection of civilians that has led to a more coherent inter-agency response. In Iraq, human rights officers deployed with the Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq developed a policy framework on human rights protection together with United Nations humanitarian bodies and other international organizations to guide humanitarian assistance. Human rights advisers led inter-agency technical working groups on protection-related issues in Côte d'Ivoire and Iraq. Another significant development has been the inclusion of protection principles in the mandates of certain peacekeeping missions, including the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Economic Community of West African States and French forces in Côte d'Ivoire.

103. A series of regional workshops on issues of protection of civilians in armed conflict was launched

in October 2002. Since that time, workshops have been held in East Asia and the Pacific, Europe, the South Pacific, southern Africa and West Africa, with additional workshops planned in the coming months in Latin America and South Asia. The workshops aim to examine the nature of humanitarian challenges during complex emergencies within each region and to explore possible means of addressing such challenges from a regional perspective. All these activities are consistent with my call for a "culture of protection" within the international community. The continued commitment of Member States to those issues will be vital in consolidating the positive gains made through our collective efforts to date.

104. Child soldiers continue to be a tragic part of many conflicts. For example, in northern Uganda, an estimated 8,400 children were abducted between June 2002 and May 2003. This is a sharp increase compared with the 12,000 registered child abductions in the 11-year period from 1990 to 2001. Some progress has been made, however, in child soldier disarmament, demobilization and reintegration over the year. In Afghanistan, UNICEF has been helping support a child-specific component as part of the Afghanistan New Beginnings Programme, with the aim to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate all under-age soldiers by 2005. Under the leadership of the World Bank, the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme in the greater Great Lakes region of Africa brings together Governments, United Nations entities, regional organizations and the international financial institutions to facilitate the demobilization and reintegration of fighters in seven countries in the subregion. Specific projects for demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of child soldiers in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo have been developed with UNICEF and are about to be launched.

Chapter III
Cooperating for development

105. Over the past year, the Organization supported Member States in their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and addressed specific issues emerging from recent major United Nations conferences and summits.

106. I am pleased to report good progress in response to the guidance provided by Member States and in line with my vision for reform of the United Nations. The United Nations system, including the specialized agencies, has continued to strive to achieve greater coherence in their policies and programmes with a view to improving the efficiency and impact of the support they provide at the country level.

Eradicating extreme poverty

107. Extreme poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon with varied causes, including insufficient economic growth and investment, persistent societal inequalities, inadequate social safety nets, a lack of investment in education and health and a shortage of development finance, as well as prevailing international financial and trade relations that leave lower-income countries at a disadvantage. To enhance the process of development, the following elements are critical: new and increased financing for development; cooperation from the private sector; a successful development round of trade negotiations; the alleviation of urban and rural poverty; secure access to food, good health and education; improved governance; opportunities for women living in poverty; and use of new technologies such as information and communications technologies for poverty eradication purposes. The Organization is making every effort to ensure that those issues are addressed at the global, regional and national levels.

108. In its follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development, the General Assembly, at its fifty-seventh session, established the high-level dialogue on financing for development, as well as the Financing for Development Office in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, which became operational in January 2003. The high-level dialogue will serve as the intergovernmental focal point for the general follow-up to the Conference. The United Nations system, in cooperation with other key stakeholders, including the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization (WTO), the private sector and civil society, will undertake activities to help accelerate the process of implementation of the Monterrey Consensus adopted by the Conference.

109. As also envisaged in the Monterrey Consensus, the Economic and Social Council held the first of a new series of high-level meetings in April 2003 with the Bretton Woods institutions and WTO in which ministers of finance and development cooperation, governors of central banks and senior officials from several international organizations participated. The outcome of the meeting, embodied in the summary by the President of the Council (A/58/77-E/2003/62), included a number of recommendations to advance the implementation of the policy commitments in the Monterrey Consensus and to facilitate the discussion process in the high-level dialogue, the first biennial meeting of which is to held by the General Assembly in October 2003.

110. Economic growth is essential to meet the Millennium Development Goals, in particular the first goal of eradicating extreme poverty. In its *Human Development Report 2003: Millennium Development Goals*, UNDP estimates that an annual GDP growth of 2.9 per cent per year is required between now and 2015 to reach the Millennium Development Goals — about double the present level. This will not be achieved without concurrent growth in the domestic private sector, the key engine of economic growth and employment generation.

111. As a follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development and as called for by the General Assembly in its resolution 57/265, I launched, in July 2003, in New York, the Commission on Private Sector and Development. The main purpose of the Commission, which is composed of prominent leaders from business, the public sector, academia and civil society, is to develop strategic recommendations on how to promote a strong, indigenous private sector in developing countries and to initiate programmes with the highest potential impact in private sector development. The Commission will submit a report to

me by the end of 2003 with specific policy recommendations for developing and developed countries, as well as multilateral development agencies. The Commission will seek to highlight successful initiatives already under way in the field of private sector development. Its overall recommendations will also be forwarded for consideration to heads of national and multilateral development agencies, as well as to leaders in the private sector.

112. Increased and more equitable world trade holds forth the prospect of helping nations to combat poverty and hunger and achieve the Millennium Development Goals, including through increased income for small farmers. The Organization, in particular the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, continues to advocate policies that enhance free and fair trade. The Doha Ministerial Declaration, adopted by the Fourth Ministerial Conference of WTO in November 2001, launched a work programme of trade negotiations to be accomplished by no later than 1 January 2005. By placing development at the heart of multilateral trade negotiations, the Doha Declaration provides a major opportunity as well as a challenge for all stakeholders to fully integrate the concerns and interests of developing countries into the trade negotiations and work programme. The Fifth Ministerial Conference of WTO, to be held at Cancun, Mexico, in September 2003, will take stock of progress in the Doha work programme and provide political guidance and take decisions as necessary. The successful conclusion of the development round of trade negotiations is vital to reviving the world economy. The Fifth Ministerial Conference represents an important milestone on the road to a successful conclusion of the Doha Round. I urge Member States to make every effort to ensure a successful outcome of the meeting as well as the success of the Round as a whole.

113. Extreme poverty is becoming an increasingly urban phenomenon, with nearly half the world's population now living in cities and one billion people in slums. The rate of rural to urban migration in developing countries is increasing at a pace that far exceeds the rate of urbanization as a whole and the phenomenon is having a substantial impact on the food and nutritional security of both producers and consumers in developing countries. At the same time, however, over 60 per cent of the population of low- to middle-income countries live in rural areas and depend on agriculture for their livelihood. Poverty reduction strategies need to take account of both groups in terms of their particular needs. During 2002, Governments launched the Global Campaign for Secure Tenure in collaboration with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) in Brazil, Burkina Faso, Jamaica, Nicaragua, the Philippines and Senegal. The Global Campaign on Urban Governance was launched in Jamaica and the Philippines, where UNDP has supported civic dialogue on critical development questions. The preparations for and launch and follow-up of both campaigns have increased popular awareness of the issues and led to partnerships between civil society and Governments on those issues, leading in many cases to immediate specific policy and legislative outcomes. For example, the Global Campaign on Urban Governance provided input to the review of the Kenya Local Governance Act, drawing on examples of legislation for participatory governance from Bolivia, the Philippines and South Africa. In India, an urban slum improvement policy has been initiated and an urban reform incentive fund has been set up. In Nigeria, a new ministry of housing and urban development has been established and in Namibia a law on flexible land tenure has been drafted with a view to ensuring security of tenure for slum dwellers.

114. Addressing urban poverty needs to go hand in hand with fighting rural poverty. At its high-level segment, held in July 2003, the Economic and Social Council adopted a ministerial declaration on promoting an integrated approach to rural development in developing countries for poverty eradication and sustainable development. A key message of the declaration was the call for renewed political will to make the global partnership work for rural development. Many countries emphasized the overriding impact of the policies of developed countries on rural development, notably those regarding restricted market access, agricultural producer subsidies and insufficient aid. All recognized that rural development was the responsibility of each country and was predicated on an enabling national environment. The issue of rural poverty is thus back on the international agenda.

115. Economic well-being, nutrition and good health are mutually reinforcing. Eradication of poverty will improve nutrition and health, while poor nutrition and ill health carry adverse economic costs and impede

efforts aimed at poverty eradication. The Organization continues to focus on activities that will help improve access to food and ensure good health. FAO is currently assisting countries in revising and updating their food security and agricultural development strategies. As a result, to date, across the regions of the world, over 150 national strategies for food security and agricultural development have been prepared. Governments have officially endorsed some 117 such strategies. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) continues to advocate strategies that build on the initiative and capabilities of poor rural producers. Acting as a catalyst, IFAD brings together key stakeholders and mobilizes resources, knowledge and policies to enable the rural poor to overcome poverty. In particular, IFAD projects provide financing and help raise additional resources to increase the access of rural poor people to land, water and other essential resources, to develop rural financial services in support of small enterprises and to encourage sustainable agricultural production, as well as to increase marketing opportunities and access to markets.

116. Food aid will remain an important instrument for hunger reduction, especially in emergency and post-conflict situations. In 2002, WFP provided food aid to 72 million of the world's poorest people. Overall, 77 per cent of WFP resources, or more than $1 billion, was used for activities in the 50 countries identified in the FAO report *State of Food Insecurity in the World 2002* as having the greatest number of hungry people as a proportion of total population.

117. In the area of health, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, led by UNICEF, WHO, the Centres for Disease Control of the United States and Rotary International, made further strides in 2002. Seven countries were polio-endemic by the end of 2002, down from 10 a year earlier. A record 500 million children received oral polio vaccine in 93 countries; UNICEF purchased and delivered the majority of the vaccines, some 1.3 billion doses. UNICEF and other key stakeholders also supported national and subnational immunization days, reaching more than 200 million children. UNICEF also worked with WHO, Médecins Sans Frontières, the International Committee of the Red Cross and other partners in responding to outbreaks of cholera, meningitis and malaria.

118. An adequate primary education is closely linked to the escape from poverty. In 2003, almost one third of all children in developing countries failed to complete the minimum education requirements for basic literacy and it is estimated that 134 million children in those countries are not in school or have never been to school. Among poor children, the majority of those who have never had access to any formal schooling are girls. Yet girls' education is unquestionably one of the keys to achieving poverty reduction. UNICEF has supported basic education by focusing on a strengthening of the cognitive and psychosocial aspects of early childhood care. This covers the promotion of universal access to and completion of quality basic education, including the development of a healthy, effective and protective learning environment. An important aspect of the support is the promotion of community participation and parents' involvement in schools.

119. Over the past year, the Organization continued to address the challenge of weak institutional structures and inadequate administrative capacity. In 2002, the United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration suggested priority areas for Member States to build further capacity in governance and public administration, including in human resource management, knowledge management, management of information and communication technology and the decentralization of administration. To that end, for example, during 2002-2003, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in cooperation with UNDP, helped in strengthening municipal and district administration in Rwanda through the preparation of relevant legislation, creation of new management structures and training. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) is building an online database on democracy and good governance practices in the region, including data on the rule of law, human rights and freedom.

120. Promoting the creation of greater economic opportunities for women is critical to the eradication of poverty, since the majority of the people living in poverty, in particular in developing countries, are women. During 2002, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) collaborated with ESCWA and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to help national institutions mainstream gender perspectives into statistical systems to better track women's participation in the formal and informal economies. The 2003 Household Income and Expenditure Survey in Mexico is benefiting from that initiative. UNIFEM is also helping to develop

strategies to link low-income producers to markets in Burkina Faso, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Asia and the Arab States. Such strategies include facilitating women's access to potential purchasers of their products, through, inter alia, the organization of cooperatives, the use of information and communication technologies — including web sites — for information exchange, and the holding of trading fairs for their products. The second Forum of Women Entrepreneurs, organized by the Economic Commission for Europe at Geneva in March 2003, exchanged good practices in improving access to financing and information and communication technology for small businesses run by women.

121. In Jordan, a partnership initiated by UNIFEM in 2000 with Cisco Systems, Inc., and the Government of Jordan is yielding positive results in increasing women's ability to access and shape the information and communication technology sector through the development of 10 Cisco networking academies. The project has achieved 63.3 per cent female enrolment in the academies and has produced better information and data on Jordanian women in the information and communication technology sector and greater interest among planners in that area in using such information as a basis for policies and programmes.

122. In 2002, the United Nations Information and Communication Technologies Task Force continued to address policy issues such as the integration of national electronic strategies into overall development and poverty eradication strategies, as well as information and communication technology as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women, as emphasized by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-seventh session, in March 2003. In 2002, the Task Force undertook a number of initiatives to address different aspects of the ICT for Development agenda. In partnership with UNDP and the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships, the Task Force launched digital diaspora networks for Africa and the Caribbean. Those initiatives aim at creating a network that will link the technological, entrepreneurial, professional and financial resources of members of the diasporas in North America and Europe with their counterparts in Africa and the Caribbean.

123. The Global Virtual University, which I launched in June 2003, a joint initiative of the United Nations University (UNU) and UNEP, is a tangible example of cooperation in building digital bridges to promote human security and prosperity through environmentally sustainable development. The Global Virtual University is an international network of cooperating universities and institutions organized as a branch of UNU with an administrative centre at Arendal, Norway. Its core institutions are UNU, UNEP, the UNEP Global Resource Information Data Centre in Norway (GRID-Arendal) and Agder University College in Norway and it will deliver online courses and programmes on environment and development with a global outreach. Additionally, universities in Ghana, Uganda and South Africa are among its participants.

124. At the regional level, ESCWA is cooperating with the International Labour Organization, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development and a number of national non-governmental organizations in implementing the Regional Agenda for Action on Technology, Employment and Poverty Alleviation. That initiative aims at harnessing selected new technologies for employment creation and poverty alleviation with emphasis on economically disadvantaged rural communities. The Agenda includes provision for setting up technology community centres to bring literacy, basic education and vocational training to impoverished communities. The first three of a series of such centres will be launched in Lebanon in September 2003. Others are to follow shortly, both in Lebanon and other member countries. In Africa, technical assistance provided by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) is helping strengthen public financial management and build capacity for information and communication technology for development in support of the African Information Society Initiative.

Achieving the Millennium Development Goals

125. In July 2002, the entire United Nations system endorsed a core strategy for supporting the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The main elements of that strategy include monitoring progress at the national and global levels, operational support to national priorities, research and advocacy.

126. The United Nations Development Group, the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs and the World Bank are collaborating to monitor progress in the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (General Assembly resolution

55/2) and to improve the process of reporting and analysing indicators at the national and international levels. My annual report on implementation of the Millennium Development Goals will document progress and shortfalls in attaining the Goals. At the country level, as at June 2003, 37 national Millennium Development Goal reports had been completed, with technical and financial support from UNDP, and I expect that at least an additional 60 will be completed by the end of 2003. The reports are helping to ensure that the Millennium Development Goals become a central part of the development debate throughout societies.

127. In its operational response to the Millennium Development Goals, the United Nations system at the country level has striven to bring its collective expertise together to support the achievement of national goals. It is worth noting that 117 countries had completed common country assessments and 86 the United Nations Development Assistance Framework by June 2003.

128. The emergence of the World Bank's poverty reduction strategy papers as a critical national tool for focusing expenditures and development assistance on poverty reduction priorities, including the Millennium Development Goals, is providing an opportunity for the United Nations system to further the Goals through its support to national Governments. To date, 30 countries have completed full poverty reduction strategy papers and 48 have completed interim papers.

129. As a contribution to the debate on obstacles to and policies for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, Part II of the *World Economic and Social Survey 2003* examines the links between certain macroeconomic policies and poverty, reviewing the relationships between growth-oriented policies and poverty, the impact of trade policies on poverty and the consequences for the urban poor of macroeconomic policy responses to shocks. It analyses the effects of some policies more directly aimed at poverty reduction, such as market-based approaches to land reform and the liberalization and privatization of staple food markets in Africa. It also examines the increase in poverty in the countries with economies in transition since 1990, as well as government and individual reactions. Additionally, under the research pillar, the Millennium Project and its task forces and secretariat collaborated with UNDP in the preparation of the *Human Development Report 2003: Millennium Development Goals*, published in July.

130. In October 2002, I launched the Millennium Development Goal campaign to make the commitments better known throughout the world and to ensure that they are the focus of global action. A Millennium Campaign Unit was established in November 2002 and is assembling a core team of developing and developed country nationals and has started to build networks and partnerships across civil society, parliamentarians, media and other key groups worldwide.

131. The Millennium Campaign team has met with officials from the Organization, parliamentarians, development ministers, religious leaders, media, civil society, non-governmental organizations, trade unions and research institutions. It has established working relationships with parliamentary networks such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank and has been participating actively in key Parliamentary Network meetings as they begin the process of collaborating on Millennium Development Goal handbooks for parliamentarians. In developing countries, the Campaign is linking and building coalitions for action to encourage Governments to implement pro-poor policies. By means of numerous public speaking engagements, seminars and conferences, including campaign tours through northern Europe and Italy, goal 8 of the Millennium Development Goals, which emphasizes developing global partnerships for development, has taken a central place in many national debates on the Goals. On many occasions, before a variety of audiences, the message has been promoted that action needs to be taken on debt, aid, trade and transfer of technology.

132. Achieving the Millennium Development Goals will require a collective response to the challenges faced by the international community in the area of development. The outcomes of recent major United Nations conferences and summits, in particular, the International Conference on Financing for Development, held at Monterrey, Mexico, in March 2002, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held at Johannesburg, South Africa, in August 2002, and the Second World Assembly on Ageing, held at Madrid in April 2002, have elaborated upon and added to the commitments made in the Millennium Declaration adopted at the Millennium Summit held at United Nations Headquarters in September 2000.

Moreover, at the summit of the Group of Eight in May 2003, the eight heads of State reiterated their support to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and the commitments made at Monterrey. The major challenge continues to be converting those international commitments through cooperation for development into better lives for people around the world. What the conferences and summits have further illustrated is that such implementation needs to be, more than ever before, a multi-stakeholder undertaking involving Governments, civil society, business and others.

Sustainable development

133. The Plan of Implementation adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development led to an increased focus on implementation through the adoption of several goals and targets. Those goals and targets were in such areas as water, sanitation, health and energy as well as related to the use and production of chemicals and the maintenance and restoration of fish stocks. The Plan encouraged the development of a 10-year framework of programmes to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production.

134. Over 200 partnerships for sustainable development were announced as part of the follow-up to the World Summit. Entities of the United Nations system have engaged in many of those partnerships and a significant amount of resources has already been committed for them. I am confident that the partnerships will help to engage key actors in the implementation process.

135. To build on the momentum generated by the World Summit, the Commission on Sustainable Development has reoriented its work to ensure the implementation of the commitments made in Johannesburg. The Organization will fully support the work of the Commission in its activities. The United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination is now finalizing the inter-agency mechanisms for system-wide follow-up to the Summit in such areas as fresh water, sanitation, energy, oceans and coastal areas, and sustainable consumption and production. Those mechanisms will make possible the coordination of policy initiatives by the concerned entities of the United Nations system. At the field level, the Organization is assisting Governments in integrating the outcomes of the Summit into national strategies related to sustainable development. Many member entities of the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs, such as the regional commissions, UNEP, UNDP, UN-Habitat and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, have made encouraging headway in integrating the operational and normative aspects of the Organization's work in the area of sustainable development through advisory services and technical cooperation. A major objective of such technical cooperation is the creation of national capacity for the implementation of the outcomes of the Summit and previous conferences and summits.

136. In 2002, a secretariat became operational in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to support the United Nations Forum on Forests, which is recognized in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation as a key intergovernmental mechanism to facilitate and coordinate the implementation of sustainable forest management worldwide. At its third session, held at Geneva in June 2003, the Forum decided to establish ad hoc expert groups for the protection of forests. Among other issues, those groups will address the finance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies for the preservation of forests.

137. The issue of water and sanitation remained high on the international agenda. In December 2002, the General Assembly declared 2003 International Year of Freshwater. In my message to the Third World Water Forum, held at Kyoto, Shiga and Osaka, Japan, in March 2003, I called for action to secure access to safe drinking water and improve sanitation, especially for the poor and vulnerable. On 22 March 2003, World Water Day, the Organization launched its first *World Water Development Report: Water for People, Water for Life*, the most comprehensive, up-to-date review of the state of the world's water resources.

Africa

138. At its fifty-seventh session, the General Assembly welcomed the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), as a programme of the African Union, which should serve as the framework for the international community's support for Africa's development. The Assembly also endorsed my decision to establish the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa in the Secretariat. The main functions of the Office include support for my role in global coordination and advocacy on Africa as well as reporting to the

Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in their deliberations on Africa.

139. The Economic Commission for Africa provides support for the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development at the regional level. ECA chairs the annual regional consultation meetings of United Nations entities working in Africa, which is a platform for promoting system-wide coordination and effectiveness in support of the New Partnership. ECA has also been actively involved in developing the codes and standards on economic and corporate governance for the African Peer Review Mechanism. It is also currently undertaking joint technical work with the secretariat of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development aimed at developing an institutional framework for mutual accountability and policy consistency in response to a request from the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee. In 2002, ECA conducted studies, issued reports and organized meetings and workshops on the capacity of the African public sector for effective management and the enhancement of participation of civil society in development and governance processes. ECA technical cooperation is promoting a broad measure of consensus on what constitutes a capable State, a better understanding of governance processes, maintaining governance issues on the agenda of policy makers and assessment of institutional capacity.

140. The United Nations Development Programme developed a strategic framework for supporting the New Partnership for Africa's Development and its secretariat, especially in its promotion of democratic governance and has continued to implement the information and communication technology initiatives for Africa of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development aimed at modernizing the communication sector in Africa. The project has so far assisted in the formulation of four national information and communication technology strategies, in Cameroon, Nigeria, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, and the establishment of 36 Cisco networking academies in Africa. Two workshops were held, in Benin and Malaysia, which promoted partnerships between Asian and African private sectors. The workshops enabled 30 African countries to share experience with their Asian counterparts and to identify ways of working closer together in an effort to bolster South-South cooperation.

141. In May 2003, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in cooperation with UNDP, supported the Pan-African Conference of Ministers of Public Service, held at Stellenbosch, South Africa, in May 2003, by providing advisory services and technical assistance in capacity-building to improve public administration in Africa. The Fifth Africa Governance Forum, held at Maputo in May 2002, on the theme "Local governance for poverty eradication in Africa" and supported by UNDP, ECA and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, yielded a set of principles for decentralization and people-centred government. Those principles are expected to reform public sector management and enhance the knowledge and skills of senior civil servants.

142. The United Nations Children's Fund and the African Union will shortly be launching a white paper entitled "The Young Face of NEPAD", in support of giving higher priority to investing in African children for a better future for the continent. Support to African Governments in achieving the objectives of the New Partnership for Africa's Development will be consistent with achieving the Millennium Development Goals, in particular the child and maternal mortality targets. UNICEF thematic work in the areas of HIV/AIDS, girls' education and immunization are also important contributions to progress towards the objectives of the New Partnership. For instance, by the end of 2002, 37 African countries had applied for support from the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization. UNICEF technical staff continue to provide assistance to national counterparts in the poverty reduction strategy papers, the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework processes to help ensure that poverty reduction strategies and debt relief have a positive effect on basic services for children and women that are linked to meeting the developmental objectives of the New Partnership. For example, UNICEF technical staff assisted national counterparts in preparing viable proposals for funding by the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization.

143. The United Nations Population Fund developed and adopted a plan of action for implementation in 2003 that focuses on five objectives of the New Partnership: poverty reduction, health, education, water and sanitation and agriculture. Through its national and regional programmes in Africa, UNFPA is supporting the objectives and activities of the New Partnership

through data collection and analysis, provision of reproductive services and capacity-building in the areas of population and development.

144. Food aid continues to be important to Africa. In 2002, WFP provided 2.1 million tons of food aid, or 55 per cent of its total food deliveries, to sub-Saharan Africa and spent 56 per cent of its resources in that region, amounting to $899 million. WFP also purchased more than 590,000 tons of food in sub-Saharan Africa, for a total value of more than $120 million, stimulating local production and markets.

Addressing the needs of the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States

145. Making development more inclusive involves ensuring that particular groups of vulnerable countries, in particular least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, are not left out of the global economy and the development process. During 2002, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States continued its efforts to promote mainstreaming of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 into the work agendas of the various agencies, funds and programmes of the Organization. Other multilateral organizations that have taken similar steps are the African Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. I have encouraged the foreign ministers of the least developed countries to establish national arrangements for the implementation, follow-up, monitoring and review of the Brussels Programme of Action.

146. Over the past year, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development made substantive and operational contributions to the implementation of the international programmes and initiatives related to least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. UNFPA continued to provide two thirds of its resources to the least developed countries, especially in Africa, for programmes covering reproductive health and rights, with an emphasis on HIV/AIDS prevention and care; gender equality and empowerment of women; and population and development strategies.

147. Major attention has been given to the preparation of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation, being held in Almaty on 28 and 29 August 2003. This is the first ever United Nations event to address the special needs of landlocked developing countries.

148. Particular attention has been given to the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation to enable the Organization to address the developmental challenges of small island developing States arising from their small size, vulnerability to natural disasters, fragile ecosystems and limited or lack of natural resources and fresh water. The Organization is participating actively in the preparations for the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action, to be held in Mauritius in 2004.

Battling HIV/AIDS

149. In the past year, the eight co-sponsors and the secretariat of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) have been engaged in providing support for the effective implementation of the Declaration of Commitment adopted by the General Assembly at its special session on HIV/AIDS, in 2001. A global consensus has emerged on policies and programmes necessary to fight the disease. UNAIDS has supported efforts to increase global awareness of the disease through education and dissemination of information to the public; to improve access to treatment in areas that are plagued by scarce resources; and to strengthen the capacity of communities with the engagement of civil society in its fight against the disease.

150. Over the past year, HIV/AIDS continued to be a key priority for the Organization's operational activities in development. During 2002, United Nations theme groups on HIV/AIDS have assisted countries to

develop multisectoral plans and to integrate HIV/AIDS into development planning instruments. I am pleased to note that, by the end of 2002, a total number of 102 countries had developed national strategic plans for HIV/AIDS.

151. The World Health Organization, with UNICEF and UNAIDS, developed and disseminated strategic information in a number of key areas to support countries in the rational selection and use of HIV medicines. WHO, UNICEF, UNAIDS and Médecins Sans Frontières continue to maintain and provide updated information on prices and sources of HIV medicines in the public domain. That initiative is being expanded to include information on drug registration in countries. UNDP facilitated community conversations in Ethiopia and South Africa on HIV/AIDS to address underlying factors that fuel the epidemic and to strengthen the capacity of communities to initiate and sustain prevention, care and treatment programmes.

152. The World Food Programme, in collaboration with IFAD and FAO, provided food assistance to 34 HIV/AIDS-related projects in over 20 countries worldwide, seeking to ensure that AIDS-affected households received food rations and food baskets adjusted to suit their needs. FAO continued to provide technical assistance to ministries of agriculture to strengthen their capacity to address the agricultural labour shortages created by the HIV/AIDS epidemic and to develop food and nutrition-based interventions to mitigate its effects.

153. UNICEF country offices have demonstrated substantial commitment to achieving the medium-term goals. Growth in expenditure on HIV/AIDS-related activities has more than tripled, from an estimated $30 million in 2000 to $67 million in 2001 and $96 million in 2002, and all 127 country offices supported HIV/AIDS-related activities and/or advocacy in 2002.

154. The United Nations Development Fund for Women is currently working with national AIDS councils in 10 countries to strengthen the councils' capacity to enhance their programmes from a gender perspective. In an effort to support gender-sensitive action worldwide, in February 2003 UNIFEM and UNAIDS launched the first electronic portal on gender and HIV/AIDS.

155. Individuals in refugee situations are often particularly vulnerable to disease. UNHCR and its partners continue to advocate for and accelerate the implementation of HIV/AIDS prevention and care projects in refugee situations. In close collaboration with UNAIDS, UNHCR completed, in February 2002, a Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS for 2002-2004, which is being implemented in Africa.

156. In the past year, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has initiated comprehensive drug-related HIV/AIDS prevention activities in several countries in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as in Africa, Central Asia, East Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean and South Asia.

157. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria remains an essential tool of the world community in striving to achieve goal 6 of the Millennium Development Goals, "Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases". The commitment of the Fund's Board and secretariat is that it will remain a financing mechanism and not become an operational agency. Success in the field will therefore depend on the active collaboration of the Fund's partners, including Governments, international organizations, the private sector and civil society. The United Nations system is committed to making the Global Fund a success. To date, the Fund has approved proposals, worth $1.5 billion, for activities in 92 countries. Grants to individual countries can represent a significant proportion of the total public spending on health.

Social development

158. The United Nations promotes policies and activities for social development, which focus on achieving a "society for all" that integrates and provides opportunities for specific social groups. The aim is to integrate the particular issues, concerns and interests of those groups into policy-making, so that they become full participants in society and active contributors to national development.

Indigenous issues

159. An example of the Organization's unique role in promoting participation for all is its support for the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. A new secretariat was established within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in February 2003. The Forum will advise the Economic and Social Council in the areas of development, environment, health, education, culture and human rights.

Ageing and people with disabilities

160. The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, adopted by the Second World Assembly on Ageing in April 2002, formulated objectives and recommendations for action in three priority areas: older persons and development; advancing health and well-being into old age; and ensuring an enabling and supportive environment for older people. Emphasis is placed on building capacity for national implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action and for incorporating ageing into national policies and international programmes.

161. Follow-up at the regional level includes the adoption by the ECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing, held in Berlin in September 2002, of a Ministerial Declaration and a Regional Implementation Strategy for the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing. That strategy addresses the economic and social concerns related to ageing societies in the region. Governments in the region of Asia and the Pacific adopted the Shanghai Implementation Strategy as a regional guideline for follow-up to the Madrid Plan and the Macao Plan of Action on Ageing for Asia and the Pacific. The Strategy has provided a broad policy framework for Governments in developing national policies on ageing and in encouraging stronger partnership with civil society and older people themselves.

162. The rights of persons with disabilities are currently the focus of work of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities. The Organization will address issues of concern to people with disabilities worldwide.

Combating illicit drug use and preventing crime

163. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime supported alternative income-generating projects aimed at benefiting rural women and children. For example, in Viet Nam, the Office has over the past year been developing a replicable methodology for the substitution of income from opium production among ethnic minority people in Ky Son District. Those activities also contributed to drug demand reduction by strengthening the capacity of national institutions and encouraging community-based development programmes.

164. With the return of large-scale opium production to Afghanistan, resulting in 3,400 tons of opium in 2002, Afghanistan is the source of three quarters of global annual opium production. In 2002, law enforcement measures by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime focused on providing support to strengthening law enforcement capacity in neighbouring and transit countries. In the first half of 2003, the Office initiated a package of new law enforcement activities for West and Central Asia worth more than $25 million. That initiative seeks to strengthen capacity for border control, including cross-border cooperation in countries neighbouring Afghanistan, and to support the creation of new drug enforcement units in Kabul and important Afghan provinces and set up new controls along key Afghan borders.

165. The Office has also introduced a CD-ROM-based training programme for law enforcement training in South-East Asia and Turkey and is involved in setting up law enforcement training centres and national databases on crime and public security in Brazil.

166. During the last year, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime managed technical assistance projects to combat corruption and trafficking in persons. Corruption projects in Colombia, Hungary, Nigeria, Romania and South Africa aimed at supporting the development and implementation of national anti-corruption programmes and assisting those countries in strengthening judicial integrity and capacity. Anti-trafficking projects in the Czech Republic, Poland, the Philippines and West Africa aimed at improving the criminal justice response to trafficking in persons, encouraging the implementation of victim support initiatives and assisting with the implementation of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

Chapter IV
The international legal order and human rights

Human rights development

167. Human rights remain very central to the work of the United Nations. Over the past year I have been encouraged by a growing international consensus concerning the universality of human rights; the efforts by Member States to implement international human rights conventions; international cooperation in building national capacity in human rights; the increasing integration of human rights into activities relating to development, conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, peace-building and humanitarian assistance; and the growing strength of the international human rights movement.

168. At the same time, problems in the implementation of human rights continue to be experienced in many parts of the world and gross violations have not ceased. A slowing international economy and inadequacies in governance have lessened the ability of Governments to uphold minimum standards of economic and social rights, as well as of civil and political rights. The Governments of some developed countries show signs of resentment as international human rights conventions are applied to them. At the same time, there is a corresponding disquiet on the part of developing countries in the Commission on Human Rights on the issue of how to deal with allegations of gross violations of human rights levelled at some of them.

169. As the Organization acknowledges such areas of progress and also the challenges that it faces in the field of human rights, it is important to note the large areas of common ground among the membership on such issues and to build on them in enhancing international cooperation for the effective protection of human rights in the future. The number of ratifications of international human rights treaties has continued to increase, consistent with one of the goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. Over the past 12 months, five new States have become parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; one to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; one to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; four to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; one to the Convention on the Rights of the Child; five to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; and three to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, which entered into force on 1 July 2003. There have also been additional ratifications to the two Optional Protocols to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. I should like to use this occasion to appeal, once more, to States that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the fundamental international human rights treaties.

170. The work of the expert bodies established under the human rights treaties continues to be of critical importance. Over the past year the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee against Torture have, among them, considered the reports of 112 States parties and adopted five general comments that clarify the meaning of the treaties and offer practical pointers on their implementation. The petitions procedures operating under a number of international human rights treaties offer valuable opportunities to enhance international protection. Over the past year, expert bodies have adopted well over 100 decisions and views on individual cases, most of which contribute in significant ways to the development of international human rights law. Moreover, a number of practical measures have been taken to improve the methods of work of the treaty bodies and enhance cooperation among them. These include the adoption by the Human Rights Committee and the Committee against Torture of mechanisms to follow up on the adoption of concluding observations.

171. The special rapporteurs and experts appointed by the Commission on Human Rights have continued to perform an indispensable role as front-line protection actors. There are now some 40 such special appointees in action. Over the past year their reports have touched upon numerous human rights themes concerning a total

of about 60 situations in different countries. These individual experts, serving in their personal capacity, have issued over 700 urgent appeals to Governments seeking the protection of persons or groups in need. Efforts have continued during the past year to strengthen their methods of operation, including measures to better clarify relations between them and staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the introduction of induction sessions and briefing material for new holders of special mandates, better coordination and follow-up to communications with Governments, and increased interaction with strategic partners inside and outside the United Nations system. The interactive dialogue between special procedure mandate-holders and members of the Commission, which has been inspired by the similar exchange taking place within the framework of the Third Committee of the General Assembly, has proved successful and will no doubt be enhanced in coming years. A new Special Procedures Branch has been established within the Office of the High Commissioner to enhance the effectiveness of the special rapporteurs and experts, including helping to develop criteria for appointment, harmonizing operational standards, improving awareness of their activities and providing an adequate level of staff support.

172. In my report of September 2002 entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change", I called for intensified efforts to strengthen cooperation within the United Nations system in support of building national capacity in human rights. This is an area where we are seeing important positive developments. Over the past year the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, using mainly voluntary contributions, has assisted some 50 national human rights institutions, as well as regional secretariats serving such institutions. The Office of the High Commissioner has engaged in human rights technical cooperation projects in 32 countries and maintains a field presence in 29 countries. The human rights work of the United Nations thus increasingly emphasizes the importance of effectively functioning national protection systems. To the same end, significant progress has been made in integrating human rights into the development activities of the United Nations system. In May 2003, the second inter-agency workshop on rights-based approaches to development adopted a number of recommendations for strengthening our activities in that area. At my request, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Group and the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs, is preparing a joint plan of action to strengthen human rights-related United Nations action at the country level. The plan, to be adopted in September 2003 and implemented over the next three years, will include specific measures required to improve the capacity of the development and humanitarian agencies of the United Nations to cooperatively assist Member States in their efforts to establish and develop national human rights promotion and protection systems.

173. Human rights violations are often particularly severe in societies undergoing major political, social and economic transformation. A United Nations University study reaffirms the priority of human rights practices in societies in transition, not only because of their intrinsic value, but also because of their multiplier effects on democratization, economic development and conflict resolution.

174. The fifty-ninth session of the Commission on Human Rights, in 2003, included an unprecedented high-level segment, which lasted four days and attracted some 70 dignitaries from around the world. At the same time, more than 40 national human rights institutions participated in the work of the Commission, providing their perspectives, assessments and insights. This has been a significant development in the activity of the Commission. Also, for the first time, national human rights institutions have been invited to participate in the drafting of an international human rights instrument through the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities.

175. Participation in the sessions of the Commission on Human Rights has been impressive by any standard. This past year, in addition to the 53 member States, 100 observer Governments and some 1,600 representatives of non-governmental organizations attended, together with representatives of regional and subregional organizations and entities of the United Nations system. The Commission has thus evolved into a major forum for partnership between governmental and non-governmental representatives within the United Nations system.

176. The Commission on Human Rights is not without problems, however. There has been public disquiet over the fact that Governments accused of gross violations of human rights are admitted to membership in the Commission. There has been concern about the tone of discussion in the Commission and the fact that it does not address certain situations of grave violations of human rights. These are all important questions that I hope will be seriously addressed by the Bureau of the Commission prior to the next session.

177. At the end of the day, United Nations human rights activities must inspire public trust. Promotional activities without adequate and effective protection will not win that trust — neither of the people at large, nor of the non-governmental organizations and civil society actors on whom we depend so greatly for our human rights work. I should like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to all those organizations and individuals in the human rights movement who make our human rights work possible, whether it be through research, fact-finding, protection, human rights education or the dissemination of information.

The International Criminal Court

178. Since the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court entered into force on 1 July 2002, much progress has been made in turning the Court into a functioning judicial institution. The Assembly of States Parties to the Statute held its first session in September 2002 and took important decisions, including the adoption of a number of ancillary instruments necessary for the Court's efficient and effective operation. Notable among these were the Elements of Crimes and the Court's Rules of Procedure and Evidence. At its resumed first session, in February 2003, the Assembly elected the 18 judges of the Court — 7 women and 11 men, representing all regions, legal systems and traditions. On 11 March 2003, at an inaugural meeting in The Hague, the 18 judges gave solemn undertakings to perform their duties and exercise their powers honourably, faithfully, impartially and conscientiously. They also elected the Presidency of the Court. In April 2003, at the second resumption of its first session and after several months of consultations, the Assembly took the additional step of electing the Court's first Prosecutor. It also made recommendations on the election of the Registrar. The Prosecutor subsequently gave his solemn undertaking on 16 June 2003 and the judges elected the Registrar on 25 June. With the judges, the Presidency, the Prosecutor and the Registrar in place, the process of electing key officials to constitute the organs of the Court has been completed. In the year ahead, the focus will shift from institution-building to preparing for the Court to exercise its investigative and prosecutorial powers and discharge its judicial functions.

179. The number of States that have ratified or acceded to the Rome Statute has continued to increase steadily. Ninety-one States, from all regions, are now parties to the Statute, compared with 76 this time last year. I am greatly encouraged by this steady increase in support and would appeal to all Member States that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Statute and to take the necessary steps to implement its provisions.

180. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 57/23 of 19 November 2002, the United Nations Secretariat has served as the provisional secretariat of the Assembly of States Parties. The Assembly of States Parties is expected to decide, at its second session, in early September, on the establishment of its own secretariat. I am confident that, in any event, the ties between the United Nations and the Court will endure: the Organization and the Court will be linked by a formal relationship agreement and bonds of history. For over half a century, the United Nations has played a central role in the efforts to establish a permanent international criminal court — an affirmation of the shared conviction that justice and peace are indispensable for human development. The establishment of such a court represents a lasting contribution by the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the promotion of the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms around the world.

International Tribunals

International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia

181. The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia handed down judgements in two cases during the past year. On 29 November 2002, Trial Chamber II convicted Mitar Vasiljević, accused of acts against the Muslim population around Višegrad, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, of persecution and murder

and sentenced him to 20 years' imprisonment. On 31 March 2003, Trial Chamber I, Section A, convicted Mladen Naletilić and Vinko Martinović, for their treatment of Bosnian Muslim civilians and prisoners of war, of crimes against humanity, violations of the laws and customs of war and grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions and sentenced them to 20 and 18 years' imprisonment, respectively. In addition, five accused entered guilty pleas. On 2 October 2002, Biljana Plavšić, formerly active in the Presidency of the Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and later a member of the collective and expanded Presidencies of the Republika Srpska, pleaded guilty to the crime of persecution. In February 2003, the Tribunal sentenced her to 11 years' imprisonment. Subsequently, in May 2003, Momir Nikolić and Dragan Obrenović, accused of crimes in connection with the fall of Srebrenica, and, in June 2003, Predrag Banović, accused of crimes at the Keraterm camp, pleaded guilty to the crime of persecution. A further four trials, involving seven accused, are continuing. In July 2003, Darko Mrdja, a former commander of a Bosnian Serb special police unit, pleaded guilty to the crimes of murder and inhumane acts. Meanwhile, in April 2003, the Appeals Chamber rejected the appeals of Zdravko Mucić, a Bosnian Croat, and Hazim Delić and Esad Landžo, both Bosnian Muslims, and confirmed their sentences for murder, torture and inhuman treatment committed while they were staff members at the Čelebići prison camp in central Bosnia and Herzegovina. On 31 July 2003, Milomir Stakić, a former leading figure in the Municipality of Prijedor, Bosnia and Herzegovina, where atrocities were committed against non-Serbs, was found guilty of extermination, murder, persecution and deportation.

182. Having received, in July 2002, Security Council endorsement of its completion strategy — that is, to concentrate on trying political, military and paramilitary leaders and to transfer cases involving mid-level accused to national courts for trial — the Tribunal embarked upon implementation of that strategy. In October 2002, it amended its Rules of Procedure and Evidence to provide for the possible referral of certain cases to national courts with jurisdiction over the place where a crime had been committed or a suspect had been arrested. At a more practical level, the Tribunal provided the Office of the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina with advice regarding its project to establish a specialized war crimes chamber in the State Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to which the Tribunal could refer certain cases for trial. In February 2003, the Tribunal and the Office of the High Representative signed Joint Conclusions, establishing a basis for a common plan to implement that project. The Tribunal and the High Representative will be taking further steps in that connection in the coming months.

183. In the past year, 11 further accused were transferred to The Hague, bringing the total number of detainees to 50, with 7 more on provisional release. Among those taken into custody were Milan Milutinović, the former President of Serbia, Vojislav Seselj, the chairman of the Serbian Radical Party and a member of the Serbian parliament, and Jovica Stanisić, Chief of the State Security Service of the Republic of Serbia.

184. On 29 July 2003, I addressed a letter to the President of the Security Council in which I mentioned that I had formed the view, following consultations with members of the Council, that it was now time to split the positions of Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, so that they were occupied by different people. I further indicated in my letter that, as the two Tribunals moved towards implementing their respective completion strategies, it seemed essential and in the interests of efficiency and effectiveness that each Tribunal have its own Prosecutor, who would be able to devote his or her entire energies and attention to the organization, oversight, management and conduct of the outstanding investigations and prosecutions before that Tribunal. By resolution 1503 (2003) of 28 August, the Security Council endorsed that suggestion.

International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda

185. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda has conducted nine trials over the course of the past year, involving a total of 23 accused. In three of those cases, it handed down judgements. On 19 February 2003, Trial Chamber I convicted Gérard Ntakirutimana, a medical doctor, of genocide and crimes against humanity and sentenced him to 25 years' imprisonment. It also found his father, Elizaphan Ntakirutimana, a pastor of the Seventh Day Adventist Church, guilty of aiding and abetting in genocide, sentencing him to 10 years' imprisonment. On 15 May 2003, Trial Chamber I convicted Eliézer Niyitegeka, Minister of Information in Rwanda's Interim

Government of 1994, of genocide and crimes against humanity and sentenced him to life imprisonment. On the same day, Trial Chamber III found Laurent Semanza, former *bourgmestre* of Bicumbi Commune, guilty of complicity to commit genocide and crimes against humanity, sentencing him to 25 years' imprisonment. This brings to 11 the total number of judgements that the Tribunal has handed down since trials began in 1997. Four further cases are nearing completion. The Tribunal expects to have rendered 15 judgements, involving a total of 21 accused, by the end of 2003. Two further trials, involving 10 accused, are currently ongoing and I expect four more, involving another 10 accused, to start later this year.

186. In addition to conducting trials, the three Trial Chambers have supervised pre-trial preparations in 21 cases during the past year, involving 31 accused. The Appeals Chamber, for its part, delivered a judgement on an appeal against conviction — it rejected that appeal and confirmed the original sentence — as well as six decisions on interlocutory appeals and 15 other decisions and orders. The judges also held two plenary meetings at which they considered and adopted a number of changes to the Tribunal's Rules of Procedure and Evidence, which should help to expedite proceedings. Following a decision by the Security Council, in its resolution 1431 (2002) of 14 August 2002, to establish a pool of ad litem judges for the Tribunal, so as to further expedite the Tribunal's work, the General Assembly elected 18 such judges on 25 June 2003, each to serve for a four-year term with immediate effect.

187. The Prosecutor has continued investigations and expects to submit indictments against up to 26 additional accused by the end of 2004. The Prosecutor's investigations will then be complete. It is possible that the Tribunal may refer a number of other cases that the Prosecutor has investigated to national courts for trial, including to those of Rwanda. The Registry has undergone changes to strengthen its capacity to support both the Tribunal's other organs and the Defence Counsel. Moreover, a Coordination Council now meets monthly to coordinate the work of the Tribunal's three organs, while a Management Committee meets every fortnight to ensure the best direction of administrative and judicial support from the Registry to the Chambers.

Special Court for Sierra Leone

188. In December 2002, the judges of the Trials and Appeals Chambers of the Special Court for Sierra Leone took their oaths of office in Freetown and elected the President of the Special Court.

189. Over the past year, the Prosecutor and his Office have been investigating crime scenes in Sierra Leone, conducting investigations abroad and interviewing potential witnesses. On 10 March 2003, the Prosecutor announced his first indictments, including those of the commander of the Revolutionary United Front, Foday Sankoh, and of a Minister in the Government of Sierra Leone, Hinga Norman. On 4 June 2003, the Prosecutor announced the indictment of Charles Taylor, President of Liberia. The indictment accuses Mr. Taylor of "bearing the greatest responsibility" for war crimes, crimes against humanity and serious violations of international humanitarian law in Sierra Leone since 30 November 1996. The Court had in fact confirmed Mr. Taylor's indictment three months previously, on 7 March, but had ordered that it remain under seal. To date, the Prosecutor has indicted 12 individuals, 8 of whom are now under arrest. One former Revolutionary United Front commander, Sam Bockarie, was killed in Liberia and the Court is conducting a forensic examination of his remains. The Court is also following up reports that a further indictee, the former leader of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, Johnny Paul Koroma, has also been killed in Liberia. In July 2003, Foday Sankoh died while in the custody of the Court awaiting trial.

190. In conjunction with the Management Committee of the Special Court, I have launched several appeals to Member States for funding since March 2003, so as to enable the Court to continue its activities beyond this calendar year. I would take this opportunity to appeal once again to Member States to contribute to the Trust Fund for the Special Court.

Enhancing the rule of law

191. As has been apparent from my previous reports, I have made the strengthening of the international rule of law a priority for the Organization. One of the principal ways in which the United Nations can contribute to that objective is by promoting the full and active participation of States in the international legal order. In that connection, it is gratifying to note the success of

the treaty events organized each year since 2000, with a view to encouraging wider participation in the multilateral treaty framework. Last year's event, which took place during the World Summit on Sustainable Development, resulted in the performance by 48 States of a total of 83 treaty actions related to 39 treaties in the field of economic development and environmental protection. I have invited Governments to participate in a treaty event entitled "Focus 2003: multilateral treaties against transnational organized crime and terrorism", to be held during the general debate at the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

192. Many States fail to sign or ratify treaties, however, not because of any lack of political will, but because of a simple shortage of technical expertise necessary for the performance of treaty actions. Some also lack the expertise to enact the necessary laws to implement the treaties that they have signed or ratified or to train the personnel required to apply those laws. In order to address those needs, I have invited States to inform me of any specific areas in which they might require technical assistance and have adapted the assistance that the Organization currently offers in the light of their responses. The Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research now provide training sessions on treaty law and practice twice a year at Headquarters for government officials, staff members of entities of the United Nations system and representatives of non-governmental organizations. This year, the programme was expanded to the regional level, with a workshop in the Lao People's Democratic Republic in February 2003, and another to follow in Fiji in September 2003. Some 15 other developing countries have requested training sessions in their capitals. I am exploring funding possibilities so that I can respond positively to this demand. More generally, with a view to streamlining the provision of technical legal assistance offered by the United Nations system, I asked all departments, funds, agencies and programmes in March 2002 to review the assistance that they currently offer. One result of that exercise has been the creation of an easily accessible technical legal assistance web site, through which Governments can identify and access the assistance that the Organization makes available. That web site now receives some 5,000 to 6,000 hits every month.

193. Over the past year, the Organization has also taken further steps towards enforcing international law. In December 2002, the General Assembly asked me to resume negotiations to conclude an agreement with the Government of Cambodia on the establishment, with international assistance, of extraordinary chambers within the existing court structure of Cambodia for the prosecution of serious violations of Cambodian law and international law committed during the period of Democratic Kampuchea. Those negotiations resulted in the preparation of a draft agreement between the United Nations and Cambodia, signed at Phnom Penh on 17 March 2003. On 13 May 2003, the General Assembly approved the draft agreement and requested me and the Government of Cambodia to take all the necessary measures for it to enter into force. The Agreement was signed at a ceremony at Phnom Penh on 6 June 2003.

194. Much work lies ahead, both for the United Nations and for Cambodia, before the Agreement can enter into force. The Government of Cambodia will have to submit the Agreement to the relevant national authorities for ratification, take the necessary steps to amend Cambodian law to bring it into line with the Agreement and ensure that the Agreement, once ratified, will apply as law within Cambodia. There is much that the United Nations will have to do, also. In particular, I shall have to secure voluntary contributions to fund the assistance that the United Nations is to provide under the Agreement. To that end, I shall soon be launching an appeal to States. First, though, I shall need to form a better picture of the probable requirements of the extraordinary chambers in terms of personnel, equipment, furniture, supplies and other operational needs. I hope to be able to send a planning mission to Phnom Penh for that purpose in September 2003. I am fully conscious of the need to act quickly. Otherwise, as the General Assembly has pointed out, the opportunity of bringing to justice the senior leaders of the Khmer Rouge and those who were most responsible for the terrible atrocities of the Khmer Rouge period may soon be lost. The Cambodian people have waited a long time to see those individuals brought to trial and it is our hope that they will not have to wait much longer.

Legal affairs

195. During the past year, the International Law Commission advanced its work on reservations to treaties by adopting further guidelines on the formulation and communication of reservations and interpretative declarations. It considered several draft articles on diplomatic protection, reviewed progress on the topic of unilateral acts of States and agreed on a conceptual outline for the topic of international liability in case of loss from transboundary harm arising out of hazardous activities. It also appointed special rapporteurs for two of the new topics in its work programme, namely, the responsibility of international organizations and shared natural resources. In the case of the third new topic — fragmentation of international law: difficulties arising out of diversification and expansion of international law — it decided to begin by studying the *lex specialis* rule and the question of self-contained regimes. Meanwhile, the Ad Hoc Committee on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and Their Property succeeded, in February 2003, in resolving all of the outstanding issues regarding the draft articles on the jurisdictional immunities of States and their property that the International Law Commission had adopted in 1991 and recommended that the General Assembly now take a decision on their final form.

196. In July 2003, the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law finalized and adopted its Model Legislative Provisions on Privately Financed Infrastructure Projects and gave preliminary approval to a draft legislative guide on insolvency law. The Commission highlighted the importance of strengthening its secretariat, within existing resources, so as to help it respond to the increasing demands on it to develop uniform commercial legislation, provide technical legislative assistance, disseminate information on the latest legal developments and coordinate its work with other international organizations.

197. The Sixth Committee of the General Assembly and the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210 of 17 December 1996 continued their efforts to prepare a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and a draft convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism. Questions of definition and other issues regarding its scope of application, including its relationship with existing and future instruments, stand in the way of adoption of a comprehensive convention, while issues concerning the scope of the draft convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism have made it difficult to reach agreement on that instrument. Meanwhile, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Scope of Legal Protection under the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel reconvened in March 2003. A number of important issues concerning measures to enhance the existing legal regime under the Convention still require reflection by States. I intend to remain actively engaged in this important matter.

198. As far as the law of the sea is concerned, several challenges lie ahead: promoting the sustainable development of ocean resources, strengthening implementation of the international legal obligations of flag States and enhancing inter-agency cooperation. In response to concerns regarding inadequate implementation by flag States of international rules and standards for ship safety, pollution prevention, fisheries conservation and labour conditions, I established an Inter-Agency Consultative Group on Flag State Implementation in March 2003 to study the issue. The question of flag State implementation also arose at the fourth meeting of the Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, held in June 2003 to consider issues relating to safety of navigation, protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems and inter-agency cooperation and coordination. That meeting also highlighted a number of other issues: transport of hazardous substances; protection of biodiversity on the high seas; the need to take further measures to combat illegal, unreported fishing; the need for more effective inter-agency cooperation and coordination; and establishment of a regular process for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment (Global Marine Assessment). I shall be submitting a report on this last issue to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session.

199. During the past year, the Office of Legal Affairs provided advice to various Secretariat units in connection with the formulation of the new Security Council resolutions relating to Iraq, in particular with regard to the operation of the oil-for-food programme. Also of particular note was the role that the Office played in developing and implementing a procedure for the election of the judges and Prosecutor of the

International Criminal Court and, in conjunction with the Government of Sierra Leone, implementing the agreement on the establishment of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Meanwhile, the Office continued to advise the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo on the exercise of its legislative and executive authority and to provide advice and support to the Organization's other peacekeeping missions, especially in handling claims and in concluding and implementing arrangements with troop-contributing countries. It also provided advice on a wide range of other issues of concern to the Organization, including procurement, the negotiation of contracts — many involving complex and novel questions, in particular those relating to the capital master plan — and the implementation of personnel reforms.

Chapter V
Enhancing management

Administration and management

200. The delegation of administrative authority to the departments and offices of the Secretariat, with concomitant accountability of programme managers, continues to be strengthened through the implementation of results-based budgeting and management. The development and use of a web-based management performance indicator system, with five indicators — recruitment tracking, status of gender balance, regular budget expenditures, extrabudgetary resource expenditures, and implementation of the recommendations in the audits of the Office of Internal Oversight Services — have provided a management tool for the programme managers and their executive offices across the Secretariat to implement actions within their programme units that will achieve the objectives of the programme.

Common support services

201. The Department of Management and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations have engaged in a partnership with a view to increasing support to peacekeeping missions through the implementation of new arrangements for field procurement. Clearer lines of responsibility and accountability have been established and redundant procedures have been eliminated. Technical and direct procurement support to the peacekeeping missions has included the evaluation of candidates for procurement positions in field missions, and the establishment of training programmes, briefings and a hotline to support peacekeeping procurement staff on any procurement-related matter on a round-the-clock basis.

202. Several common service initiatives, such as the sharing of procurement contracts, the creation of a standardized identity document applicable throughout the Organization and system-wide collective bargaining with international airlines for more favourable fares and conditions are being worked on. Included in these initiatives are organizations that are not a part of the United Nations system, such as the Asian Development Bank, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the European Union and Interpol. Such collective endeavours are expected to lead to a greater consistency of practices within the Organization and to yield financial benefits.

Human resources management

203. Since the introduction of the new staff selection system on 1 May 2002 and the revised performance management appraisal system (e-PAS), emphasis has been placed on the institutionalization of these systems, and on improvements to the information technology support tools. The staff selection system has resulted in greater accountability, transparency, a faster recruitment process, and a larger pool of candidates, particularly from developing countries. The revised electronic e-PAS system, which supports discussion between supervisors and staff, has increased compliance and achieved a more measurable appraisal system throughout the Secretariat and in peacekeeping missions. Expanded learning and career support programmes, including mentoring and career resource centres, are strengthening the skills and competencies of staff and managers and contributing to changing the management culture of the Organization. There is a particular focus on Junior Professional staff, including targeted training courses, mentoring and a managed reassignment programme. The flexible working arrangements which came into effect on 1 February 2003, Secretariat-wide, are part of an effort to assist staff to strike a better balance between their professional and personal lives. A priority is the further development and implementation of a Secretariat-wide policy on HIV/AIDS that will enhance awareness and expand access to voluntary counselling and testing, care and treatment.

204. The security of United Nations personnel remains an issue of paramount importance. Regrettably, attacks continued throughout the year under review, but new measures put in place appeared to be having a positive impact. The number of staff members who lost their lives in the service of the Organization during the 12 months prior to August 2003 was the lowest since 1992. All this was changed dramatically by the devastating attack in Baghdad, on 19 August 2003. That shocking incident obliges us to look again at the conditions in which we work and to consider fundamental changes, however sad and painful that may be.

Capital master plan

205. The capital master plan approved in 2002 by the General Assembly authorizes the implementation of the refurbishment of the Headquarters complex and the remaining phases of design development. At the Assembly's request, the possibilities for a financial package from the host country, as well as other contributions from the public and private sectors, are being explored. New York City has offered to construct a new building south of the Headquarters that would serve as alternate accommodation during the renovation and later for the consolidation of United Nations offices currently scattered in the vicinity of the Secretariat. This generous offer is very welcome.

Financial situation

206. The positive financial trends of the last two years are continuing. All three indicators — cash in hand, debt to Member States and amounts unpaid by Member States — continue to improve. One particular trend indicates that there may be problems ahead, however. The number of Member States paying their regular budget contribution in full is slipping from the earlier years when steady progress was made. In fact, in 2002, only 117 Member States paid their regular budget contributions in full, reflecting a serious setback in the progress achieved between 1994, when only 75 Member States paid in full, and 2000, when 141 Member States paid in full. This means that deficits in the regular budget may occur.

Accountability and oversight

207. The Office of Internal Oversight Services is working to strengthen the Organization's integrity and ethics systems through the sponsorship of a United Nations organizational integrity initiative to increase staff awareness and protect the Organization's resources and reputation. The Office is also providing more structured and integrated planning of its oversight assignments through its risk management framework. Under this framework, a risk analysis is made of all the client departments, offices, funds and programmes of the Office of Internal Oversight Services to identify and prioritize those programme and operational areas having a high vulnerability to inefficiencies, fraud, waste and abuse.

Monitoring, evaluation and consulting

208. In the past year, the Office of Internal Oversight Services provided consulting to other departments on changing their work processes and organizational structures with a view to implementing the continuing reform of the Secretariat. Working in close collaboration with four client departments and offices, the Office contributed to ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of adopted solutions. In response to a request of the General Assembly, a review by the Office of Internal Oversight Services of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights produced 17 recommendations on streamlining and strengthening its activities and management.

209. An in-depth evaluation of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs concluded that it had effectively discharged the responsibilities of the Secretary-General under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The Office of Internal Oversight Services recommended that the Division actively participate in setting up a new international coordination mechanism requested by the General Assembly to better respond to the growing demand for technical assistance from States parties to the Convention. The Office of Internal Oversight Services made proposals to the Committee for Programme and Coordination for a pilot thematic evaluation intended to provide a systematic review of the activities carried out by several programmes of the Organization sharing common purposes.

Audit management

210. From July 2002 to June 2003, the Internal Audit Division conducted 101 audits, 5 of which resulted in reports to the General Assembly. An audit of United Nations information centres (A/57/747), for example, highlighted the need for an urgent re-assessment of the information centre concept in terms of usefulness and continuing relevance. Significant resources were spent on the operations of information centres in developed countries, and the Office of Internal Oversight Services called for a different approach and a reorientation towards developing countries. The Office recommended inter alia that the Department of Public Information reassess and update the goals and strategies of information centres, and the Department has already begun implementing many of the recommendations. Other audits examined the status of recommendations concerning the liquidation of

peacekeeping missions (A/57/622), the procurement of goods and services for peacekeeping missions from Governments using letters of assist (A/57/718), and the policies and procedures for recruiting staff for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (A/57/224).

211. An audit of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women examined the sustainability of the Institute, and made a series of recommendations to address its financial and operating difficulties. As recommended by the Office of Internal Oversight Services, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees changed the rules for project agreements with international non-governmental organizations. This has resulted in more reliable financial information and competitive procurement, as well as greater transparency in project staff spending.

Investigations

212. The Investigations Division is exploring ways to deal with the increased volume of allegations of misconduct, mismanagement, abuse of authority and waste of resources, 20 per cent of which were categorized as significant to the Organization in 2002, in part through new partnerships with national law enforcement authorities. For example, in the investigations of refugee smuggling in East Africa and sexual exploitation in West Africa, the Division coordinated ad hoc task forces, which, in addition to investigators, included experts on loan from other agencies or on special service agreements, in areas such as medicine, human rights, child and refugee protection, law and sexual abuse counselling.

213. In close collaboration with the Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) of the European Commission, the Division recovered $4.2 million that had been misappropriated by a former senior staff member of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo. The investigation led to the successful prosecution of the staff member by the German authorities in June 2003. In an effort to establish normative standards, the Fourth Conference of International Investigators, hosted by OLAF and held at Brussels in April 2003, unanimously endorsed the guidelines for the conduct of investigations by investigators of international and bilateral organizations which had been drafted and presented by the Division.

Strengthening the Organization

214. The main rationale behind my agenda for further change was to align the activities of the Organization with the priorities agreed upon at the Millennium Summit and the global conferences. During the first half of 2003, major efforts were made to ensure that the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 to be presented to the General Assembly reflected this alignment. The proposal which will go before the Assembly later in 2003 includes the reorganization of two major departments, the Department of General Assembly and Conference Management and the Department of Public Information. I also intend to establish a strategic planning capacity in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, strengthen the management of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and increase investment in support to human rights at the national level. Additional investments in staff training and information technology underpin these proposals.

215. There are several areas where the reforms have already taken effect. Efforts to improve the servicing of the General Assembly, through better planning of meetings and related documentation, and work to sharpen the focus of our public information activities are beginning to yield results. The role of the office of the Special Adviser on Africa has been strengthened to ensure a coherent and integrated approach to United Nations deliberations, reports and advocacy in support of Africa and in the follow-up to the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

216. In other instances, work is under way, but not yet complete. For example plans to strengthen actions relating to human rights at the country level, the clarification of roles and responsibilities in the area of technical cooperation, efforts to streamline reporting and publications, and the work of a high-level panel to review the relationship between the Organization and civil society will require additional work. The funds and programmes have made considerable progress in strengthening their country-level impact by developing collaborative programming and budgeting tools for joint programming and pooling of resources. The new programming tools will be introduced in 2003, with the aim of expanding their use to more than 80 country programmes by 2006.

217. The reform package also contained several systemic improvements to the planning and budgeting process. Initial steps have been taken to improve the budget documents themselves, with shorter, more strategic presentations, in particular for peacekeeping operations, and the inclusion of results-based indicators for all programmatic areas. Detailed descriptions of other proposed changes will be contained in other reports submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session.

218. Efforts to strengthen the Organization ultimately depend on an able, versatile and well-managed workforce. Improvements to the management of human resources through the new recruitment and placement system are now showing results. Work is in progress to further reduce the barriers to staff mobility both within and between United Nations organizations, particularly in the field. Additional measures will be taken to grant individual programme managers greater decision-making responsibilities.

Chapter VI
Partnerships

Communications

219. Renewed focus and greater clarity of purpose were the twin objectives I mentioned two years ago in initiating a comprehensive review of the work of the Department of Public Information. A new operating model and a new organizational structure for the Department have now been put in place. Activities are now grouped more strategically under three Divisions. A Strategic Communications Division responsible for devising and disseminating information on priority themes, and an Outreach Division, which develops supportive partnerships with civil society, have been established, while the existing News and Media Division has been reorganized to increase its capacity to deliver timely, accurate, objective and balanced news.

220. The key element in the new operating model is the identification of Secretariat departments as departmental "clients" that establish their own communications priorities based on priorities laid down by the General Assembly, which the Department of Public Information then communicates strategically to various target audiences. Once established, these priorities form the basis of issues-driven promotional campaigns, implemented using all the media assets of the Department, including print, radio, television and the Internet. Strategic partnerships with the Member States, civil society, the private sector and academic institutions will also serve to disseminate the messages both internationally and, at the local level, through the United Nations information centres. In a clear endorsement of the new strategic direction, the Committee on Information at its twenty-fifth session, in April/May 2003, welcomed the restructuring of the Department of Public Information, including its new operating model and organizational structure.

221. The Department is also engaged in strategic partnerships with entities within the United Nations system. A new communications strategy is being developed for the World Summit on the Information Society, to be held at Geneva in December 2003 in cooperation with the International Telecommunication Union. The Department is also working towards engaging the media as stakeholders in the information society, and emphasizing the role of freedom of speech and the press. In association with the television industry and the Government of Switzerland, the Department is organizing a parallel event at the Summit, the World Electronic Media Forum, which will focus on the role of the electronic media in the information society.

222. As part of an invigorated strategy of outreach to non-State actors, in November 2002 the Department constituted a Civil Society Service in the Outreach Division, charged with integrating all programmes servicing non-governmental organizations, educational institutions and the general public, as well as initiating and fostering partnerships with new entities, including those in the private sector and the media. A new Educational Outreach Section in that Service orients key products, including the flagship publication *UN Chronicle*, the multimedia UN Works programme and the global teaching and learning project, Cyberschoolbus, to the needs of students and teachers the world over.

223. Using new technologies, the Department continues to provide audiences worldwide with instant access to the latest news about the United Nations. On 5 February 2003, the United Nations web site reached a new milestone when it was accessed more than 10 million times in a single 24-hour period. The number of times the site is accessed has grown from more than 11.5 million in 1996 to some 1,695 million hits in 2002, owing in part to the addition of material in all of the official languages. Since September 2002 over 28,000 links have been provided to parliamentary documents on the Official Document System.

224. The United Nations is making increasing use of webcasting — live broadcasting over the Internet of meetings and events. On 7 March, 24,000 users in 66 countries watched the webcast of the Security Council meeting on Iraq live, and many more accessed the images later. An Arabic version of the United Nations News Centre web site has been added to the French and English sites, and sites in the other official languages are now in preparation. A measure of the success of the Centre is the growing number of news outlets and web sites that refer to the United Nations News Service as the source of the material they publish.

225. United Nations Radio has firmly established itself as one of the important traditional multimedia channels for strategically communicating the activities and concerns of the Organization to audiences in all regions of the world. A recent survey offered a conservative estimate that some 133 million people listen to United Nations Radio programmes at least once a week in the six official languages, as well as in Portuguese and Kiswahili. Since April 2003, 10 new official television partners have joined in the dissemination of United Nations Television and have aired about 50 hours of United Nations programming to some 2 billion viewers.

226. The Department of Public Information has undertaken a number of initiatives aimed at strengthening the Organization's public information capacities in its peacekeeping and political missions in the field. Standard operating procedures for field-based public information units are being prepared, in close collaboration with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. By agreement with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, a public information expert is now stationed at the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, to aid in the development of a public information training capacity. A roster of public information personnel for rapid deployment has been established, and a training programme for rapidly deployable field personnel is in preparation. The Department has also organized the dispatch of a senior public information officer to assess the situation on the ground in Côte d'Ivoire and to provide recommendations on local media development, which have been used to guide regional inter-agency efforts to address media issues in that country.

227. In my report entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change", I proposed the rationalization of the network of United Nations information centres around regional hubs, starting with the creation of a Western European hub. The Secretariat is implementing a plan for the establishment of the proposed hub in Western Europe by the beginning of 2004 and, in parallel, is closing nine existing information centres in that region.

228. A noteworthy achievement of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, launched on 7 February 2003, was the redesigned interface to its main databases, UNBISnet, which is now more powerful and easier to search. Important reference tools, such as the United Nations Documentation Research Guide and the United Nations conferences and observances page, have been updated and on 27 March the UNBIS Thesaurus was launched. It is fully electronic and, like the Documentation Research Guide and the conferences and observances page, is available in all six official languages.

229. A major development for United Nations libraries was the formation in March 2003 of the Steering Committee for the Modernization and Integrated Management of United Nations Libraries, under the leadership of the Department of Public Information. This initiative is intended to create a more modern, efficient and accessible system of library services throughout the Organization.

230. The Cartographic Section of the Department continues to provide valuable technical assistance to the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission in its preparation for the demarcation of the international boundary between the two countries, following the successful delimitation of the boundary in April 2002. United Nations cartographers also helped the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission in developing a work plan for the demarcation of the international boundary between those two countries in February 2003. The Section will, however, be transferred to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in 2004.

United Nations Fund for International Partnerships

231. Through the successful partnership of the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP) and the United Nations Foundation $489 million have been programmed, as at 31 December 2002, for 251 projects worldwide in four programme areas, namely, children's health; population and women; environment; and peace, security and human rights. Other multilateral and bilateral donors provided approximately $175 million in additional funding for programmes and projects supported by UNFIP and the Foundation.

232. The projects that comprised the UNFIP children's health programme have contributed to preventing the death of 240,000 children by providing 37 million vaccinations against measles in 2002. These projects have strengthened the national health systems of target countries with continuing training of health-care workers, the promotion of injection safety and the

inclusion in the measles campaigns of other health activities, such as vitamin A supplementation, immunization against polio and the distribution of bed nets to prevent malaria. As a result of the $82 million made available in 2002 through the efforts of the Foundation and UNFIP, all but seven countries worldwide are now free of polio.

233. Biodiversity emerged as a central priority of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which underlined the importance of providing and sustaining the livelihoods of poor rural communities. Funding provided by UNFIP and the Foundation to the United Nations Environment Programme catalysed a major initiative in May 2003, targeted at reversing the decline of coral reefs. In September 2002, UNFIP also facilitated a partnership in September 2002 between the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the E7 — an umbrella organization of nine electric utilities in Japan, Europe and North America — to work together to expand the access to electricity of the poor.

234. The United Nations Fund for International Partnerships also provided advice to the private sector and foundations on partnerships with the United Nations system, including guidance on policies and procedures and suggestions on strategic ways for corporations and foundations to support the Millennium Development Goals. The Fund is also engaged in establishing ties with numerous organizations that aim to raise funds for the causes of the Organization.

Project services

235. In 2002, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) acquired a total of $509 million in new business for its project portfolio. Business acquired from UNDP amounted to $334.2 million or 66 per cent, a balance amounting to $174.9 million or 34 per cent coming from other entities within the United Nations system. On the loan portfolio, the International Fund for Agricultural Development entrusted project supervision and loan administration responsibilities to UNOPS for 14 additional projects totalling $225 million in the course of 2002, compared to $328 million in 2001.

236. The United Nations Office for Project Services continued to support the mine action programmes of three major clients — UNDP, the Mine Action Service and the Office of the Iraq Programme — in 18 countries around the world. That role expanded significantly in the course of the year, with increased activities in northern Iraq, new responsibilities for the existing programme in Afghanistan, and the formulation of new programmes, which are expected to expand, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Sudan.

237. A new form of partnership was initiated in 2002 with the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria. In April 2003, UNOPS was designated by the Fund as one of the four pre-qualified Local Fund Agents, its task being to provide management services and to supervise, on behalf of the Fund, the implementation of nationally executed programmes financed by the Fund. To date, UNOPS has signed agreements with or has been designated to be the Local Fund Agent for China, India, Mongolia, Serbia and Montenegro and Timor-Leste, and negotiations for similar work in other countries are under way. Elsewhere, UNOPS is exploring options to assist the Fund's operations by supporting principal recipients in the implementation of project activities.

238. In May 2003, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS entrusted to UNOPS the implementation of a project entitled "AIDS in Africa: scenarios for the future", developed and funded in partnership with Shell United Kingdom. The project aims at responding to the impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Africa and forming a shared understanding of the problem. Other objectives are to help to activate a broad-based response from all segments of society and to overcome the stigma and discrimination experienced by HIV-positive individuals. The Global Business Development division of Shell International will support the project through technical know-how and contributions to the budget.

239. An example of combining private sector expertise with United Nations goals is the UNDP Human Development Programme in Angola, the execution of which is entrusted to UNOPS and which is supported by the Italian private sector firm Coop, a consortium of over 200 consumer cooperatives. Under the programme, which aims to improve the lives of the children in Angola, 100,000 children were vaccinated and 6,000 children obtained a daily meal, on a budget of $260,715. UNOPS is facilitating the link between Coop and the local economic development agencies created by the Human Development Programme with

the objective of bringing Angolan coffee to the Italian market, establishing viable trade relations and creating synergies between development assistance and the private sector. Similar arrangements are being made in the framework of other UNDP-funded projects to be executed by UNOPS in Mozambique and South Africa.

Civil society and business partnerships

240. In my report entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change", I highlighted the engagement of civil society as an aspect of the United Nations reform process and announced that I would assemble a group of eminent persons representing a variety of perspectives and experiences to review past and current practices and recommend improvements to make the interaction between civil society and the United Nations more meaningful. In February 2003 I appointed Fernando Enrique Cardoso, former President of Brazil, to chair the High-level Panel on Civil Society, comprising 12 individuals with backgrounds spanning the governmental and non-governmental sectors.

241. The main task of the Panel is to produce a set of practical recommendations on how the Organization's relationship with civil society, and with the private sector and parliaments, could be improved. In particular, the Panel will identify best practices in the Organization and other international organizations with a view to identifying new and better ways of interacting with civil society. The Panel will also examine ways in which the participation of civil society actors from developing countries can be facilitated. At its first meeting, held in New York on 2 and 3 June 2003, the Panel agreed upon a work programme that emphasizes an open, transparent and consultative process. The Panel will submit its final report in April 2004.

242. In the past year the Organization forged several new partnerships. This was an important innovation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, during which more than 200 partnerships were launched by a wide variety of stakeholders, including various agencies, funds and programmes within the Organization. These partnerships were aimed at implementing sustainable development through various means such as capacity-building, education and improving access to information. The Organization must ensure that the partnerships are successful and help in the effective implementation of the commitments made at the Summit.

243. The Organization continued to strengthen its partnership with the private sector. During the reporting period, the number of companies participating in the Global Compact doubled from approximately 500 to more than 1,000, more than half of which were in developing countries in all regions of the world. At the same time, the Global Compact was launched in 14 countries, bringing to more than 50 the number of countries where the Global Compact has taken root. Moreover, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) was welcomed as an additional member of the Global Compact's core group of agencies, until then consisting of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Labour Organization, UNDP and UNEP. The core group of agencies supports the Compact by providing training materials on its principles and supporting outreach activities. UNIDO will be responsible for small and medium-sized enterprises.

244. In January 2003, the Global Compact adopted a new strategic approach to conducting its operations whereby companies are asked to publish a "communication on progress" in their annual or other prominent reports to increase transparency and public accountability. A significant element of this strategic approach is its emphasis on policy dialogues within multi-stakeholder forums to identify and address problems in areas of interest to the international community. During the reporting period, the Global Compact convened policy dialogues on business and sustainable development in 2002; and HIV/AIDS in the workplace and supply chain management and partnerships in 2003, involving participants from business, labour and civil society. These dialogues have resulted in joint initiatives such as the development and application of a business guide to help companies to ensure that their behaviour is not negatively contributing to conflicts; a common set of recommendations on how companies, non-governmental organizations, Governments and intergovernmental organizations can contribute to greater transparency and help to combat corruption; and an initiative on promoting awareness about HIV/AIDS in the workplace. An initiative to encourage sustainable business in the world's least developed countries was launched in Ethiopia, and activities are

planned for Angola, Bangladesh, Cambodia and Madagascar. The initiative brings companies together with other stakeholders to identify business opportunities in the least developed countries that will be sustainable and will be designed in ways to help local small and medium-sized enterprises.

245. To enable the Global Compact to accomplish its objective of helping to create a more sustainable and inclusive global economy and to ensure that the Compact's new strategy of "communication . on progress" has a significant impact, the Organization must continue to give the Global Compact the creative space it needs to grow.

Conclusion

246. In the perspective of human experience one year is a fleeting moment. It will not be possible for some time to make final judgements on many of the activities of the United Nations. It is clear, nevertheless, that the Organization is contributing to international stability and progress in positive and practical ways, and that it is making a real difference in the lives of individual people around the world.

247. The record of the United Nations activities has also shown that the system is exceedingly flexible. The Organization will need to maintain its capacity to adapt to new challenges and global conditions, while remaining faithful to the purposes and principles of the Charter.

248. Despite its imperfections, the United Nations still embodies the hopes of the peoples of the world for a peaceful and just world. This review of the Organization's work in the past year should contribute to a better understanding of the role which the United Nations plays in global affairs, in particular as an effective instrument of international cooperation.

03-47609 (E) 090903